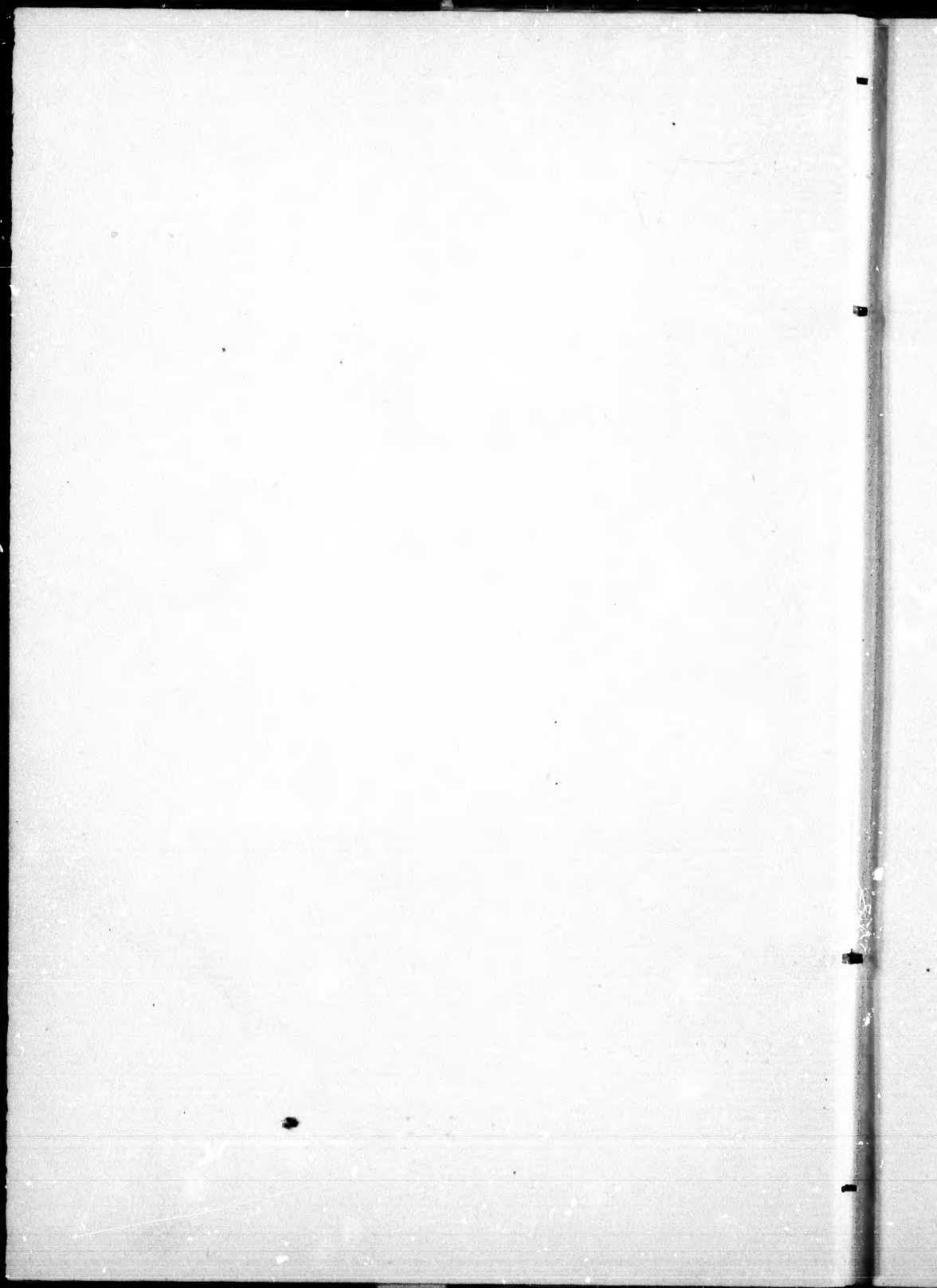




POEMS

AND

STORIES

BY

LUCY WEBLING

AND

PEGGY WEBLING.

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TO
OUR MOTHER AND FATHER.

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LUCY WEBLING.

POEMS.

THE DAYS THAT ARE TO BE.

When the eyes are growing pensive,
And the smile begins to die,
And at its death the quickened breath,
May tremble to a sigh ;
The tender lip can quiver, the smile must linger
there,
For then the heart is dreaming, of the dear old
days that were.

If thought and deed together,
In sympathy entire
May plan and move, the hand may prove,
The eyes are filled with fire,
And resolute the mouth ; unstayed by any bolt
or bar,
For now the heart is working in the happy days
that are.

When the brow is drawn together
And the face, untouched by years,
Is turning old with grief untold,
The lashes wet with tears,
The look may live a moment, by loving eyes
unseen,
But oh! the heart was breaking for the days
that might have been.

When the eyes are wide with longing
And the cheek begins to glow,
When trouble sleeps and triumph leaps
To light the forehead so ;
Oh, splendid dream of fortune those burning
eyes must see,
For then the heart is beating of the days that
are to be.

A CANADIAN RIVER SONG.

I can hear the sighing breeze
In the silver willow trees,
Oh, the summer days of sunshine
And the sky's unfathomed blue ;
See your dripping blade sun-kissed
And the turning of your wrist,
As I lie and fall a-dreaming
And we drift in your canoe.

Now a swifter stroke, a swing,
And a rapid's clattering,
Then the sound of ripples dying,
With the even dipping too
Of your paddle, and the scent
Of a flowering tree, that bent
To the water, white with blossom,
As we glide in your canoe.

Then a flower—then a bird—
Then the aspens ever stirred,
Little joys enhance the perfect
Joy of floating on with you ;
Springs that tinkled in the shade
And a mimic rapid made,
On a ridge of clay and pebbles,
We could hear from your canoe.

And the sunshine brightly shone—
And the river winding on—
Where the harebells mocked the heavens ;
Where the mournful cat-bird cries ;
Through the waving ferns we trod,
Where the glowing golden rod
Lends a glory and a brightness
To the summer as it dies.

Here and there a maple turned
To a brilliant beauty, burned,
In the fall of evening shadows
Slender pine trees darkly rise,
And the birch stems glimmer white,
In the sky a rosy light,
And a vivid line of scarlet
Where the sun is setting, lies.

Fades the day in red and gold,
Fade the gathered flowers I hold,
Oh, the bird's song breaks the stillness
Sunset colour leaves the skies ;
By the snapping bonfire blaze
All the beauty of those days,
I can see is held and lingers
In the dreaming of your eyes.

We are drifting at the will
Of the current, lying still
Is the paddle, I am dazzled
By the pleasant golden haze,
See, the moon so red and round
Seems to drift across the ground,
And a song comes floating past us
In the dying of those days.

And the fire-flies have begun
To make brightness, one by one,
Or they glitter in a cluster
Flash and sparkle as we gaze,
When a bat comes flitting by,
And a bright star in the sky
Glistened, shadowed in the water,
In the even of those days.

Oh, the red moon turned to white
With a flood of silver light
In the darkened sky above us,
While the stream reflects the rays !
Ah ! to be again with you
Gliding on in your canoe,
In my dream I drift for ever
Through the sweet Canadian days.

THE ROSE OF LIFE.

When a child she played and playing
Heeded not the crimson West,
Or that shadows lengthy grew,
Or that daisies filled with dew
When she lightly sank to rest.

For it seemed to her, life opened
With the morning just begun,
Skies of blue and sunshine bright,
Her hereafter but the night
At the set of that same sun.

And she did not hear the echo
Of the patter of her feet,
Troubled not at cloud or rain
Or that snows should come again,
Or that time might be too fleet.

For her laughter bubbled upwards
At the world, one sweet surprise,
Till the day at eve grew pale,
When her lashes dropped the veil
On the sunshine of her eyes.

Until life appeared to open
As the budding flowers part,
Then new joys to her were born,
When she trembled at the dawn
Of the woman in her heart.

And she stretched her hands in gladness
At the joy, so newly gained,
And the deep and strange delight
Makes her tremble and turn white,
Till the tears fall, unconstrained.

Then she feels her power growing
As she stands exultant, wild,
Thought and thought together vied
She, rejoicing, in her pride,
In her prayers, a timid child.

Sweet her waking, and her wonder
What the coming days may prove,
Sweet her past, untouched by pain,
And her silence, sweet again,
In unspoken dreams of love.

Better far her restless watching
Than the placid sleep of old,
Life and love have grown to be
Such a dear reality,
Full her heart as heart can hold.

Let it go, the baby laughter
With the daisies and the dawn,
And the rose, unknown before,
She will hold for ever more,
Though her soul must feel the thorn.

A LESSON IN LOVE.

How should I win her,
How should I woo?
Cupid, give me a lesson, do.
What shall I tell her,
What shall I say?
Teach me, Cupid, tell me, pray.

Cupid answered, "Do not swear
She is fair,
And radiant as the sky above you,
Nor waste your days in words of praise,
Only say—I love you."

If she be cruel
If she be cold,
Shall I suffer a grief untold?
Others who love her
Kneel at her feet,
Must this broken heart retreat?

Cupid answered, "If she smile
To beguile
Another heart, she means to prove you,
Then never grieve or take your leave,
Only plead—I love you."

If she should tremble,
If she should weep,
Sorrow wakened that lies asleep,
If I should bring her
To tears for me,
Then my life would worthless be.

Cupid answered, "Dry her eyes
If she cries,
You cannot know what sorrows move her,
Nor try to tell that all is well,
Only look—and love her."

If she be angered,
If she be stern,
Cupid, set me a lesson to learn;
They worship the sun
They bow before,
So I worship, so adore.

Cupid answered, "Take no heed,
There's no need,
For she's beside you, not above you,
And soon your kiss shall tell her this,
Sweet, my sweet,—I love you."

MAY IN ENGLAND.

Where the pleasant branches, throw
Shadows on the grass below,
And the nettles bud in white ;
Turning silence into song,
Singing soft and loud and long,
Hear the birds, in shrill delight.

The daintiness of England, lies
In violets beneath blue skies,
Her lovely music skylarks sing,
Wander on, about your feet
Blow the cowslips, thick and sweet
In the earliness of spring.

Linger by the gate, or turn
Down the path of flower and fern,
Every flower is looking up,
Wildly bloom in marsh and mire
Glowing king-cups all afire,
Golden hearts within the cup.

Through the fresh and waving grass,
To the gentle stream we pass,
Bordered by the spring buds pale,
Dear, come down with me to-night,
Then, beneath the moonbeams light
We shall hear the nightingale.

SERENADE.

Open the lattice, look down and discover
That the eyes looking up are the eyes of your
lover,

The little white daisy hath folded her petals,
No bird, save the love-laden nightingale sings,
On the half-closed bud the gay butterfly settles,
While the little white moth hath unfolded his
wings.

The breezes are kissing the roses of June,
And there is a path of light to-night, beloved,
towards the moon.

Open the window,
All the world is sleeping,
Every rose is weeping
Tears of glistening dew,
Love and a Lover are waiting here for you.

Open the lattice, the night wind is roving,
The river is purling and singing of loving,
My heart in the stillness to you is uplifting ;
In the flood of the moonlight the current runs
pale,
Oh, come and be with me, for we must be drift-
ing
And Cupid shall lend us his wings for a sail.

Then lift those sweet eyes and come out to me
soon,
For there is a path of light to-night, beloved,
towards the moon.

Open the window,
All the world is dreaming,
Every star is gleaming
In the dome of blue,
Love and a Lover are waiting, dear, for you.

MY PRAIRIE POEM.

Drive on the trail, away and away,
In the beautiful morning hours,
The joyous prairie—the long June day—
The waking of radiant flowers.
Over the hot grass and into the pools,
Clear in the hollows, from recent rain ;
The silent waves of sun and shadow
Ripple the still green sea of grain.

Drive on and on, where the long fields lie,
In the light on the long fields lying,
Where the edge of the earth is softened in sky,
And the grain is moving and sighing.
Where the gopher scampers across the trail,
The daisy shines, in her own green leaves,
And the gold of her petals foreshadow
The bountiful harvest sheaves.

Drive, the sunbeams are level and low,
The hovering gleams of even,
And the unbroken circle of earth below,
And above, the glamour of Heaven.
On quiet wings a bird wheels by,
Flying alone to his reed-bound nest ;
On the trail the horse hoof raps and rings,
The wind comes racing out of the West.

Drive on, night comes and the air grows chill,
And the wind my hair is lifting,
And only the colour is lingering still
On the path where the sun went drifting.
The prairie hushed, the prairie dreaming,
The wild rose folding, the whispering dies
Out of the wheat fields, the large white moon
Hangs like a sickle across the skies.

L'ENVOI.

You dear, dear days, your sunshine lives,
And oh, a sweet remembrance gives
Your glad hours an eternity.
No Western arch of sky above
Is mine to-day, but given me
A wide ideal of love.

THE WISH OF MY HEART.

I fill to the thoughts of my—friend,
The wine in my goblet is glowing,
His life, as this cup, to the end
Be brimful of joy overflowing.
My eyes are aflame.
If I whisper one name,
I know we have drifted apart ;
But behind, and above, and about me is love,
I wish you—the wish of your heart.

I think of the time that is past,
And muse on the dreary to-morrow,
I realize sadly at last
How closely beside me rides sorrow.
I sit in this mood
And I ponder and brood,
Although we have drifted apart,
With an agonized cry, I whisper " If I—
If I had the wish of my heart."

For a word never sighed, never known,
I long in a passion of feeling
For a kiss never breathed, I'm alone—
And peace on my spirit is stealing.
Oh, future unread,
Oh, love song unsaid,
Oh, measureless moment of pain ;
If the wish of my heart, were the wish of your
heart,
Why, I'd be in Eden again.

TO YOUR BEAUTIFUL EYES.

At summer's noon in dreaming June,
The whispering leaves between,
I can descry a glimpse of sky,
Above an arch of green ;
No cloud to mar, so rich they are
Those deep and vivid skies,
They lend to you, for oh, their blue
Is glowing in your eyes.

The white winged ship may onward slip
And cleave the ocean through,
The lands asleep beneath the deep,
Are hid from mortal view ;
Oh ! waters wide, oh ! restless tide,
And infinite must be
The soul, that lies behind those eyes,
As fathomless the sea.

“I STOOD ON THE SHORE.”

I stood on the shore of the Seas of Time,
And watched the certain tide.

On the shifting sand I took my stand,
And the flood is deep and wide
Of the Time that is, and the Time to be,
Where the Ships of Life put out to sea.

And I asked my soul, what vessel is this
Whose sides and sails are black,
And in her wake, where the long waves break,
She leaves a darkened track.

Oh! dread the day when across the foam
The Ship of Death comes drifting home.

Then the Ship of Hope came floating in,
Her joyous passage made,
Her sides are bright with sunset light;
The sun-flecked water lapped and swayed
About the stern, and I bless the day
When Hope in my heart's harbour lay.

There's a stately ship against the sky,
Her sail the light of morning kissed,
She rocked and stirred like a proud sea-bird
On the waves of amethyst.
The Ship of Love shall sail to me,
And never again put out to sea.

TWO LITTLE SLIPPERS AND A BIG
RED HAT.

High up in his attic the Poet sat,
The world to him seemed exceedingly flat,
With his bottle of ink and his rusty pen ;
 But what do you think
 Occurred just then ?

Why, down the street
He heard the trip of feet,
And his heart went pit-a-pat,
 When just by chance
 He caught a glance—
Of two little slippers and a big red hat.

At his window bars the Poet leant,
Nor touched his poem, in a sweet content,
For roses seemed to bud and bloom,
 As he mused and dreamed,
 In his narrow room.

With a sense of joy and a touch of pain
The echoes still in his mind remain,
And every beat of his heart that day,
Seemed the fall of feet that ran away.

Since up the street
He heard her tripping feet,
And his heart went pit-a-pat,
And just by chance
He caught a glance—
Of two blue eyes and a big red hat.

And now that the Poet is old and white,
And the inkstand gold, and he need not write,
He longs again for the summer sky,
And the joyful pain,
And the passers by.

When up the street
He heard the trip of feet,
And his heart went pit-a-pat,
He longs for the chance
Of a passing glance—
At two little slippers and a big red hat.

HAT.

y,
y.

write,

LOVE SONG.

If I thought Fame could give my name
An everlasting crown ;
And Fortune blind be ever kind,
And Fate would never frown ;
With rose leaves red beneath my tread,
My praises fill the land,
I'd rather climb a longer time
With you to hold my hand.

If every word a nation stirred,
And gained a nation's praise,
And gold, the sign of power, were mine,
Triumphant all my days ;
I'd stand apart, my yearning heart
One smile would sadly miss,
I'd cry your name, forget my fame,
And turn to take your kiss.

SUNSET ON A CANADIAN RIVER.

Drifting away, drifting away,
Lightly and stealthily onward we slip,
Hark to the paddle—its dip, dip, dip,
 Dying the day.
Dabble your hand in the darkening stream,
Look at the paddle blade dip and gleam,
 Shadows are gray.

Swing at the turn, swing at the turn,
Oh, what a glory is lit in the skies,
Joyous the day that in loveliness dies,
 How the clouds burn.
Quivers of pain at the close of the day,
There in my lap, a-drooping they lay,
 Flower and fern.

R.

THE PATHWAY TO THE SUN.

Summer brings the languid day,

Lazy days,

Summer flings a sunny haze,

Skylark sings.

In our long, light boat we glide,

And the waters blue divide

When our long, lithe oars you guide,

All the way.

Over the river the sun has thrown

A line of glorious light,

We've swung the rapids, one by one,

Love, Love, your oars uplift,

Love, Love, and let us drift

All, all alone, the way is bright,

And vanish into the sun.

n,

Autumn brings the harvest day,
 Glowing days,
Autumn flings a deepened haze,
 Sickle swings.
Through the stubble of the grain
Ride, your hand upon my rein,
In a golden world again,
 All the way.

Round our feet the stubble shone,
But oh, the world is wide,
Towards the light we'll run and run,
Love, Love, keep pace and pace,
Love, Love, and let us race,
Side by side, and on and on,
And vanish into the sun.

AFTER AN ABSENCE.

When I came back to England, April skies
 Were white with cloud,
And violets opened, like the earth's glad eyes,
 And cuckoos called aloud.
I saw the gentleness in your sweet face again,
 And watched your eyes, grown grave and
 clear,
And joy within my heart touched hands with
 pain,
You looked to find a smile and found—a tear.

Some thought, at seeing me, had made you
 white
 And made me dumb,
My brain was reeling in one mad delight,
 For oh, my Fate had come.
I noted tenderly your new found tenderness,
 I saw not earth or sky above,
But just your eyes, the while my eyes confess,
 I looked to find a friend, and found—a love

REMEMBRANCE.

When mighty rivers flow past me again
I move, where the redolent pine tree stands,
And picture the waving of golden grain,
Of peaceful waters, and harvest lands.

Or shimmering lakes, where the pictures lie
Painted by Heaven, of cloud and sky.

And the sleeping flowers, on the golden verge
Of the tender hush of the afternoon,
Where the gentle prairies roll, and merge
In the infinite blueness of June.

And falling of turbulent, musical rills
On purple-shadowed and lonely hills.

And the same sweet silence ever broods
On the dainty flower, when the wind is still,
And the awful mountain solitudes,
Where the snows are white and chill.

And God's eternal beauty lies
On earth, and sky, and in your eyes.

LULLABY.

The bluebells are ringing,
The harebells are swinging,
So close the big blue of those sweet eyes of thine,
They chime
To the time
Of my lullaby singing,
As I rock on my bosom this baby of mine.

My darling is sleeping,
The starlight is peeping,
The long lashes cover those large eyes of thine,
I love,
And above,
The Angels are keeping
The white little soul of this baby of mine.

THE SONG OF YOUTH.

Life is so glad, and the Sun in the skies
Is flooding the earth with his light,
My spirit wake, from your dreaming arise,
Arise from the quiet of Night !
My youth and freedom bloom refreshed again,
For hope is like a fire to me, and tingles in each
vein.

I know the buds of life around me break
Into the flowers of love,
Away in the stillness the birds awake,
Away in the blueness above.
And earth, and sky, and sea, as mine I claim,
For in my heart ambition burns, and leaping,
turns to flame.

But he, who has passed through the morning
days,

He shall tell you the world is sad,
My heart is beating, and singing, and says,
The world is glad, is glad.

Who would not give his wisdom and his gold,
To lift his face to Heaven, with the same dear
joy of old?

The Future seems a golden word to me,
The time that is shrouded and dumb,
And oh! this very day may hold the key
Of perfect days that are to come.
Of days, when even this delight shall seem
As colourless, and pale, and past, as is my last
night's dream.

If birds can sing in joy all unsurpassed,
And the flowers about our feet
Can bring the light again to eyes downcast,
Because they bloom and are so sweet;
And senseless earth is lovely, and seas that roll,
Then what may my life burn and be, with my
immortal soul.

JUST FOR TO-DAY.

Just for to-day, dear, let us stand apart
And let the world rush on. Oh, I could weep
To be so happy, here, against your heart ;
Let others yearn and fail, or fall asleep,
Or mingle in the strife as best they may,
Just for to-day.

Just for to-day, love, let there be no light
Save in my eyes for you and yours for me,
Shut out the troubled gaze, the lips grown white,
The dreadful cry of the world's agony,
The dull and sodden earth, the sky's dim gray,
Just for to-day.

Just for to-day, together stand and rest ;
Time has been winged with us since first we
met,
Now in the ecstasy of love confessed,
The voice still broken and the lashes wet,
The veil of silence gently drawn away—
Just for to-day.

Just for to-day, my dearest, hand in hand,
 With pulse and heart in tune, for these brief
 hours
 Joy pauses on her pinnacle, we stand
 Each in the other's heart, among love's flowers
 We, in our new found Eden, lose our way ;
 Just for to-day.

THE VOICE ACROSS THE SEAS.

There's a calling in the April wind,
A voice across the seas,
The monotone of sadness,
In the wind of April's madness
In the bare, brown maple trees,
A tender message dares to bring,
A message from the Motherland
Of England in the spring.

And the ears of England's lovers
Hear the wailing in the wind,
Away from home they wander,
Yet the exiled one grows fonder,
And the heart is unconfined
And rushes home in fancy yet,
When April's breath is burdened
With the scent of violet.

In fancy hear the gurgle
And the purling of the brook,
Dancing on towards the river,
Overhead, the green leaves quiver,
Over seas, I stand and look,
With April's pale light in the skies,
And dream, that budding at my feet
The paler primrose lies.

Cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo calling
In an ecstasy of song,
In his recklessness rejoicing
All the joy and gladness voicing,
Crying loud and calling long,
While the song birds sing and sing ;
Wind of April, blow, and bring me
Voices of an English spring.

There's a calling in the low-toned wind,
A voice across the land,
And my tear-filled eyes are yearning
And my o'er filled heart is turning
For I hear, and understand ;
Before me rolls the restless sea,
But the sweet, sweet fields of England
Are the only home for me.





PEGGY WEBLING.

STORIES.

A GHOSTS' DINNER PARTY.

"The difficulty seems to be, where are we to send the invitations?"

Duncan looked around the room at the council who were sitting upon the subject—my wife and I, Jack Heely, and my wife's cousin, Annette Debenham.

"And the next difficulty is, how are we to address the invitations? Doesn't the whole matter strike one, on serious reflection, as utterly preposterous?"

A decided "Yes" this time from the ladies.

"Hang it all, you know, it isn't half a bad idea, you know," from Jack Heely.

"What is *your* opinion?" from Duncan, turning to me, "Do let the Genius have a word to say about it in his own castle." (They call me the Genius—not because they think I am one by any means).

"I should rather enjoy it myself, Duncan," I replied, "It's an unprecedented idea, as Jack says, and when I start a thing I like to go through with it."

"I agree with you, dear, so far," said my wife, "and if it could be managed it would be a novel experience."

"A little too novel for me," said Annette, "for I must say that it seems utterly impossible."

"And why?" from all sides.

"Just think of it seriously, Mr. Duncan. Though we are all spiritualists, and Norman is a mesmerist, and I can do thought-reading (when I am pushed—unconsciously of course!) just because my cousins have a splendid old haunted castle to live in, we actually talk about inviting a dinner party of ghosts! Isn't it enough to make one laugh?"

And she threw back her pretty head and made us all laugh with her.

Yes, that was our idea—a dinner party of ghosts! It was a great many years ago, when my wife and I were enthusiastic on many subjects, and I had inherited (some months before the above conversation took place) a little fortune from my uncle and an old, handsomely furnished house in the North of England. We were naturally proud of it, with its beautiful terraces and rose garden; its shrubbery, and

dark oak panelled chambers, with little diamond shaped windows and low window seats ; its one turret ; its wainscotted hall with a great open fire-place, armour and ancestral portraits on the walls ; and last, but by no means least, the Family Ghost !

No one had ever seen our Family Ghost and we had not the slightest idea where it was to be found, what it was like or how it was originally created. Nevertheless, we were determined to unravel the mystery and inspect the Family Ghost, for surely I had inherited him—or her—or it—along with the castle and the furniture, the shubbery and the turret? The departure of a number of visitors and the simultaneous arrival of Duncan, Annette Debenham and Jack Heely, seemed a propitious time to have a little, quiet ghostly party, and invite our own particular phantom to pay us a visit.

We were five tried and old friends ; Jack Heely was a gallant young soldier, every inch of him, from his curly hair to his neat patent leather boots, not particularly enthusiastic or thoughtful perhaps, but a great fellow for practical advice ; Duncan was very different—a dreamer of thirty, with a melancholy turn of

mind ; a man who lived carelessly and lazily in the world of action and ardently still in the world of thought, with just a vein of romance in his nature that kept him from being a cynic. Lastly, there was Annette Debenham, a really charming girl with the prettiest figure, the brightest smile and the softest brown eyes ; those brown eyes have been the inspiration for a great many poems I believe, but then as Duncan once very truly observed, "Annette was the sort of young lady to *provoke* poetry."

At first Annette and my wife went heart and soul into the ghost scheme, but when Duncan began to talk about it without sneering at the whole project, and finally when I read the invitation list they were not quite so enthusiastic. Our plans were fairly well matured, and we had settled all the minor points before the difficulty arose of how and to what place we should send the invitations. Duncan held my list in his hand and looked enquiringly at each of us in turn, as we sat with closed doors in our brightly lighted drawing room. Annette was on a little chair by my wife, and Jack twisted about on the music stool, occasionally turning to the piano to play a chord or the first bars

of a waltz, while Duncan read the list with slow precision.

"The first person to be invited is: A Maiden who was starved to death in a dungeon of the Tower of London.

Secondly: The Head of King Charles I. from Windsor.

Thirdly: A Woman's Shriek from a ruined castle in Warwickshire.

Fourthly: The Girl with the Pig-tails from the old inn near to this house.

Fifthly: A Snake-headed Man from Tewkesbury.

And sixthly: The Family Ghost.

"Oh, Norman!" cried my wife, "If they really came I think it would kill me."

"Now look here," said Jack, "Let us go over all the people, ghosts you know, separately and see what we come to."

"The bottom of the list, of course," said Duncan; "Well, first we have the Starved Woman from the Tower—"

"It seems to me," interrupted Jack, "a little personal to invite a starved person to dinner, and she's crown property, isn't she?"

Perhaps they will send her down under charge of a Beef-eater."

I frowned on Jack to be serious and Duncan continued.

"The next is 'Head of King Charles I. from Windsor;' I wish all of his Majesty would favor us. Then, the Ghost of a Woman's Shriek from Warwickshire—" Here my wife objected, she said she didn't know how to provide for it—what would it eat and drink?

"It appears to me," I replied, "that it will be useful, because you two girls may get nervous and feel inclined to shriek yourselves, and it will only look like a compliment to your guest when you do."

"Hear! hear!" said Jack, "Leave the Genius alone to knock the right nail on the head! Fire away, Duncan, dear boy."

"Fourthly," read Duncan, "The Girl with the Pig-tails."

Annette expressed her opinion that a girl (ghost or reality) who wore her hair in pig-tails could not be really "out" and probably unused to dinner parties. Jack said he objected on moral grounds, she must be a vain young person or why should she be noted for her pig-tails?

I myself felt extremely anxious to see those pig-tails, and Duncan agreed with me that she was the most horrible and consequently the most interesting creature on the list.

"Fifthly, the Snake-headed Man from Tewkesbury." (Unanimous approbation, and a foolish remark from Jack that we might keep him when we got him and exhibit him to pay expenses.)

"Sixthly," said Duncan, "and lastly, the Family Ghost." Needless to say that we didn't black ball our own property, our own special apparition.

"Is everyone satisfied?" said Duncan, "Is our list complete? If you all agree we can post our invitations to-morrow; now I think it over, all these mysterious beings come from specified places—Tewkesbury, Windsor, and so on—we must trust to the G. P. O. for the cards reaching them."

"I don't approve of the Starved Young Woman from the Tower," said Jack, "Cut her out."

"Don't be an idiot, Heely," exclaimed Duncan, "don't be an idiot. Why on earth should she be omitted?"

Jack only shook his head, bade us good night in an unusually quiet manner and retired with the ominous remark :

“That Starved Young Woman will spoil it all—mark my words, will spoil it all !”

And the council broke up for the time being.

To cut a long matter short, the weeks passed by and the day for the dinner party of ghosts arrived.

I need scarcely say we were very excited and a little nervous too. I didn't think that my wife need trouble much about the menu ; we were inviting the ghosts purely for our own entertainment and if they didn't approve—well, they could wait until we were ghosts ourselves, and then we would give them every satisfaction. But when the eventful day arrived all these little things were settled. At breakfast-time we were all in high spirits, except Duncan, who growled, asked what time this “business” commenced and did his best to dampen our ardour. At lunch, the atmosphere a trifle misty ; at three o'clock, departure of Duncan for a long walk, to everyone's satisfaction ; at four, my wife found alone and tearful

in one corner of the library ; at five, the Genius takes afternoon tea with the ladies and Duncan, who has been caught in a storm and returned in a much better temper ; at six, excited entrance of Jack—

“ I say, what I want to know is, how am I to dress, is it to be swallow-tail or what? It seems an awfully absurd question you know, but I don't know how to appear for such a scratch lot as you expect.”

“ My dear boy, of course you must dress, King Charles is coming (a bit of him), and I don't agree with you that any visitors of ours can be a ' scratch lot.' ”

“ Don't be ruffled, Genius ; I only wanted your authority to get myself up regardless of expense! Ah. Duncan, you're back ; didn't you get nearly drowned, old man? It seems to be raining in torrents now ; I suppose the scratch lot—beg pardon, distinguished visitors—will take the fly, and the lady who screams might entertain the cabby on the box ! ”

The wind was blowing and moaning round the old house, we could hear the wild and ceaseless rustle of the lofty trees, and the fall of the heavy drops on the window-pane. It

was stormy and black without, supremely quiet within. We looked at each other with excited eyes, as we all happened to come down stairs into the great square hall at the same minute; Jack extremely handsome, the ladies a little pale perhaps, and Duncan just now in aggravatingly good spirits. We stood for a minute or two by the cheery open fire place, then Duncan stepped beneath the largest hanging lamp and drew out his watch.

"Five and twenty past eight," he said, "Invitations issued for half past, if they intended to come they would be here now, but they are evidently not coming. I told you so!"

He had *not* told us anything of the sort as it happened, and Jack exclaimed:

"Give them a few minutes grace."

So we stood quite silent again, and I can't say whether our feelings were those of relief or disappointment when the old clock chimed out the half hour, and a broad smile began to appear on our faces, when—

"Norman!" exclaimed my wife, "What is the matter with the lamps—see! They are every one getting lower and lower."

"They only want turning up, my love," I returned.

But no, those lamps were not to be turned, they burnt clearly, but they burnt low, and the whole house was only to be seen by a very dim but steady light.

"Let them alone, Genius!" Duncan cried, "If we are all ridiculous, it is no reason why you should set the house on fire. Do come into the drawing room, let us have some music and forget all this nonsense at once."

"Come along then," I said, and drawing my wife's hand through my arm we went into the drawing room together, followed by the rest. The lamps here also were burning low, and the ruddy light of the fire was throwing dancing shadows on the wall. I felt my wife's hand shake, and as I looked down at her she gave me a little convulsive squeeze, and whispered,

"Norman, look! There's a man standing on the hearth."

At the same minute Annette asked in a low excited voice,

"Oh, Norman! Who is that?" Then I myself noticed for the first time a tall and dark gentleman with his back towards us, leaning in

a weary attitude against the mantel-piece, but how strangely thin, almost transparent the figure appeared ; I fancied I could plainly trace the lines of a velvet curtain through the curling chestnut hair, and the shape of the iron fire dogs through the hands that were locked behind him, and negligently held a long heavy riding whip ; but I did not hesitate to address the figure.

As I spoke he turned and bowed to us in a quiet dignified manner, his long locks, tied behind with a black ribbon, falling over his pale attenuated countenance, and the words died away on my lips. I was partly startled at the haggard, deep-set eyes, and partly at the dress of the stranger, that of a gentleman at the end of the last century, high boots, and a long riding coat with a little cape, a rich lace cravat, held by a sparkling diamond ; the old fashioned whip I mentioned above he still retained, together with his gauntlet gloves and stiff felt hat, in one slender white hand adorned with several rings ; but though his dress was rich and elegant, it was untidy and splashed with mud. I observed that his lips were a little apart and he was breathing hard, as if

from recent quick riding in the storm ; indeed his whole body was quivering and little drops of rain still glistened in his hair—but how in the world had he reached our drawing room without passing through the hall ?

Seeing my evident confusion, Duncan came to my assistance and asked in a perfectly unconcerned, courteous voice, before whom we had the pleasure of standing.

“ Sir,” returned the gentleman, “ It is many years since I visited this house, and I only come now at the urgent command of its present owner.” His voice was more clear and haughty than any voice I have ever heard.

“ I have ridden hard and far to-night, not for the first time ; and I am repaid, not for the first time—by the silent welcome of beauteous eyes !” with another low bow to my wife and Annette.

Just then the door was violently thrown open, and in a gust of wind two more of our gruesome visitors made their appearance ; the Snake-headed Man from Tewkesbury and the Girl with the Pig-tails, hand in hand, both dancing, leaping, laughing and gesticulating ; merry little jets of red flame springing out of

the carpet wherever they touched it. They were altogether the most horrible little couple I had ever seen, the gentleman about three feet high, wiry, hump-backed and deformed in every limb, with a snake head, and at the same time, if I may be allowed to say it, a ludicrously human expression ; the lady—

“ Ah, well ! now we understand the notoriety of the pig-tails ! ” exclaimed Jack Heely. I must confess that the lady's personal appearance was very surprising ; she had a particularly pretty head, and that was about all of her ! You wonder how she danced then ? Easily, for her hair—a lovely golden colour—was neatly braided in two long plaits, and at the bottom of each thick pig-tail was the daintest little bare foot you can imagine. How they did dance too ! Sometimes whirling round and round in a giddy waltz, sometimes bounding on the chairs and tables, sometimes stamping and leaping from one side of the room to the other.

The first arrival, our friend of the 18th century, took no heed of them, but stood, as at first, gazing into the fire. The rest of us crowded together on the opposite side of the

room and discussed how things were going, in awe-stricken whispers.

"Those two," said Duncan, pointing to the Snake-headed Man and the Girl with the Pig-tails, "evidently think this is a ball, not a dinner party. Who is our melancholy friend with the riding whip?"

We all glanced in his direction and my wife whispered,

"He must be the Family Ghost. Hasn't he a dreadful, dreadful expression? Norman, if we live through to-night, we will give this house to the first unhappy wretch who will accept it. I am so frightened! What *shall* we do if any more of them come? It is maddening!"

"I say, it isn't so bad at present," said Jack, "If only that Starved Young Woman keeps out of the way. The Pig-tail Girl has an awfully handsome head, but of course she hasn't any heart; eh, Duncan? Why don't you go and talk to her, old man? The Genius seems to have quite lost his wits; I would myself, but—"

"Listen! What is that?" Annette interrupted in an eager voice; we all strained our

ears and heard, through the wind and rain, faintly in the distance, the sound of a piteous scream—nearer and nearer it came, louder and louder it grew, and just as I was about to rush down stairs, Duncan recollected that it was probably one of our invited guests.

“Oh! of course it is,” said Jack, “Don’t be alarmed, it’s only the Shriek, and confound it! What a voice it has—here she comes! If that lady belonged to my county I would have her gagged. Now she’s in the room! I’ll bow in the direction of the door at random. Now she’s quiet—don’t be agitated, my dear, you are among friends! Now she’s at it again!” As a piercing shriek rang in the air quite near us, though nothing was to be seen.

“What a cheerful little thing it is!” continued Jack, “I like a girl with a hearty voice. One thing is extremely comfortable, Genius, none of these—animals seem to expect you to entertain them, do they?”

So we five sat together shivering, yet half enjoying it too, and we had quite made up our minds that a previous engagement had kept His Majesty and the Starved Maiden, when the

head of the "Blessed Martyr" appeared on the scene.

It was the most eerie of the whole "scratch lot," to quote Jack's rude remark; it floated slowly along the air with a quiet and gloomy expression on the long handsome face, a slight mist hovered all around it, its eyes were open and it had a habit of moving into dark corners, where it would turn and twist the throat, and look fixedly and coldly at the surrounding objects. I wondered whether the rest of the unlucky monarch was invisible to us, or whether the head only was able to leave its present abode; whether it would be judicious to enter into conversation—say about the *Court Circular*, as naturally it would take an interest in the Royal Family.

"Oh, Norman!" my wife whispered to me, "Do not stand dreaming now, let us go in to dinner and get it over!"

"Hear! Hear!" said Jack, "Now what I want to know is, am I to offer my arm to the Girl with the Pig-tails, or escort the unseen Shriek?"

"No, no!" said Annette, "You must stay

by me, Jack ; please don't desert me ! " and she looked up at him in a piteous little way.

Duncan gave his arm to my wife and I was about to offer mine to her of the beautiful Pig-tails when a new idea struck me.

"Why be ceremonious at all with these apparitions?" I asked. "Let us simply lead the way to the dining room, and they will follow if they choose."

And they did choose ! I shall never forget my wife's face as I looked towards her at the other end of the table, when our guests were seated—I say "seated," but the Family Ghost and the Snake-headed Man were the only two who "behaved with decency," Annette declared afterwards ; King Charles' Head still moved gloomily about, the Pig-tail Girl kept up her noiseless step-dance—sometimes on her chair, sometimes on the table cloth, her bare little feet tripping lightly between the glass and silver ; the Lady with the Shriek was evidently sitting by Duncan, as the first time we heard her voice in the dining room, he gave a great start and jerked his chair nearer the Family Ghost, but that gentleman lifted his deep-set, hollow eyes and poor Duncan (I believe for

the first time in his life) actually stammered, blushed, and jerked it back again towards the Shriek, and indeed he kept this starting and jerking up for the rest of the evening.

None of us enjoyed the repast very much, and all attempts at conversation were a failure ; our own particular Family Ghost, indeed, drank to "The King," and was answering one of my feeble remarks, when the sound of a horse cantering up to the door—we all heard it plainly in a lull in the storm—seemed to attract his attention, he sprang from his chair (I'm sure I saw the table through him by the way), stared wildly around, and with a muttered oath rushed from the room, slamming the door behind him.

"An abrupt, but characteristic departure !" said Jack, filling his glass, "Good riddance I say—Norman ! Annette ! Look at the crack of the door—just look at it ! The Starved Young Woman, by Jupiter !"

Yes, will you believe me, in she coolly came through the crack of the door ! She was about seven feet in height, her eyes were large and hungry looking, and as to being as thin as the proverbial match, I should like to see anything

in the world so thin as the Young Woman from the Tower.

There was general surprise and confusion, but the new arrival made a curtsy, favoured us with a grin and slipped into a seat.

First she eat a dish of fruit that happened to be near her, after this she attacked a jelly, then as I was about to carve the fowls, she took the dish from under my very hand, caught hold of the carvers and finished up one of the chickens before I recovered from my surprise. Such behaviour was too much for my wife, she rose in disgust and left the room, taking Annette along with her.

We men, left to ourselves, looked from the Snake-headed Man on one side, to the misty head of King Charles on the other, and—must I tell the honest truth?—not daring to face the sleep-haunting ghosts alone, fled into the hall with one accord, followed by the screams of the Shriek and the chuckles of the Starved Young Woman of the Tower.

“For heaven’s sake, leave those monstrosities to themselves!” said Duncan, “Though I must say I never thought that you, Genius, were a man to run away!”

"I like that!" I returned hastily, "It was you yourself, Duncan, I saw terror in your eye and I escaped solely on your account."

Duncan laughed in a perfectly idiotic manner, and said that he was afraid the alarm had affected my brain. Without listening to his unjust remarks I strode into the drawing room to the ladies. Annette rushed forward and my wife threw her arms around my neck.

"Oh, Norman! Send them away!" she cried. "Oh, it's dreadful! How brave of you to come here at once to look after us!" (The three heroes glanced at each other and smiled in self-satisfaction). "We insist on your doing something, we can't endure it any longer."

"I think you are right," answered Duncan, "It's an absurd, gruesome thing when one comes to think of it. Come, Genius, you are the host, and I think it is your duty to order the miscellaneous collection of horrors out of the house."

I thought it only polite to transfer the duty to Jack, and as the ladies would not hear of being left alone again, we made a sally from the drawing room together.

"It is remarkably quiet," I whispered.

"Listen, not a sound, even the Shriek is silent !"

"Look, dear," said my wife, "it is actually twelve o'clock, and the lamps are burning quite brightly once again."

I threw open the dining room door, and everything was as quiet as the grave. The table in wild disorder, the fire nearly dead upon the hearth, but no trace of the five ghosts that we had left there.

"They have fled before the light of dawn," said Duncan, seriously.

"Oh! I'm so glad!" said my wife, "But I wonder what became of them!"

"I've hit it!" cried Jack, bursting into a hearty fit of laughter; "I know what became of them; I see it all! First she cleared the table, then (when we were out of the way) she eat up all the other ghosts. Don't you remember I said that the Starved Young Woman would spoil it all? And she has!"

I do believe that Jack was right, and I know that not even Duncan had the spirit to contradict him!

CRINKLEBACK'S CANOE.

I shall never forget Crinkleback's Canoe. It was one of the most wonderful and unexpected inventions of the 19th century.

We always expected something brilliant from Crinkleback. He is simply "Crinkleback" to all the world; in the home circle he is known as Fred, and he answers to "Crink" or any other name you say in a particularly hearty voice.

He is a clever, energetic, never to be put down, "I'll-hit-the-right-nail-on-the-head" mechanical genius; with plenty of pluck and the sunniest temper that ever directed a practical head and cunning fingers.

I believe Crinkleback has attempted everything that can be attempted; in his boyhood he added to his income by carpentering work about the house, and as years advanced he spent all his odd time in endeavouring to perfect numberless inventions; but somehow Crinkleback was always unlucky.

I recollect his first great appliance for heating his father's office with a wonderful steam boiler.

He slaved at it day and night; his admiring family gave pecuniary assistance; he put it up himself; he started it triumphantly; he left his father at ten o'clock one morning in a delightful sort of Turkish bath; and at four that afternoon the devoted old gentleman was rescued with difficulty from imminent suffocation, and parts of Crinkleback's burst boiler could be found in all parts of the city.

But do you think that daunted him? No, indeed; that same evening he commenced to make plans for a child's bicycle to be run (like the heating apparatus) by steam; and he successfully finished the bicycle, too; and it nearly sent his little brother over to the Great Majority, but he was very proud of it for all that; though Crinkleback himself confessed that it never possessed the beauty of a Brantford Red Bird. But these two capital inventions were mere trifles compared to the canoe, that was a master piece.

"It was really awfully clever," Emanuel said; and our Canadian friend, strong, un-

polished, generous Harry "Canuck" expressed his approval in the highest slang in his vocabulary. How well I remember his words, although it is nearly three years ago since I heard them, when five of us, the best comrades in the world, were discussing canoeing on the banks of a Canadian river.

It was a glorious afternoon in the beginning of July, the sky an unclouded blue, the mellow notes of many birds mingled with the rustling of the maples, and murmur of birch trees down to the water's edge, where our canoes were drawn up on the sandy little beach, and we five reclined on the bank among the grasses and ferns; our shady hats drawn over our eyes, and the little whispering breezes just stirring the wild flowers about our heads.

In England, by the way, we hear a great deal about Canadian winters, but little of Canadian summers; much of the frost and snow, little of the heat and brilliance; much of the jingle of sleigh bells and dangerous delight of tobogganing, little of the long summer days and the joys of canoeing. Such days as when we five,—Crinkleback and I, Mohawk, Harry "Canuck" and Emanuel, "The

Cambridge Man"—were content to paddle along in the good old way, before Fred invented his own canoe.

It was the first and last summer we all had together.

I was only on a visit to Canada for a year, Emanuel the same; Harry "Canuck" after a few weeks holiday had to rush back to business in the States; Mohawk—our Indian girl, what would I not give to see you again? The winds tossing back your dark hair, and your own Canadian scenes reflected in your blue-gray eyes!

Lastly, there was Fred,—a bank clerk, and liable at any minute to be ordered off to the other side of the continent. This was in the mind of Emanuel (so called because he was an undergraduate of Emanuel College, Cambridge,) when he said these words on the particular afternoon in question:

"You must hurry up, Crinkleback, the summer is getting on, and I rather think you have set yourself a heavy task."

"Let me see," said Mohawk, lying at full length like a true Indian after the hunt and the feast, we had just had tea, "it is the third of

July, and it will take you a month anyway to make your canoe."

"More!" put in Harry "Canuck," finishing the marmalade with a fork and a pocket-knife, "Never mind what Mohawk says, you can't work faster than you can work—just my luck, confound you!" (this last to the pocket-knife, which has slipped into the marmalade bottle.)

"Yes, I can," said Crinkleback, "I have heaps of time you know, and as I think of it my plan develops itself. The central idea is this—"

"Crink has the floor," muttered Harry, "Order! Order!"

"I shall have a strong paddle of red cedar," continued Crinkleback, "about seven to eight feet in length, you see, my dear Mohawk, it *must* be long; it will be attached to a light wooden wheel, say about half a foot to a foot in diameter, over this wheel will be drawn a cord, also attached to the top of the paddle, this cord passes from the stern to the bow, where it is connected with a small steam boiler."

"Also useful for cookin'," said Harry "Canuck" in a parenthesis.

"Let me see," said Crinkleback, "where was I?"

"Sitting on the boiler, old man," said Emanuel.

"Yes, the boiler. Well, this boiler, by means of a steam appliance of my own invention, will work the paddle, guided by a small handle held by the man in the bow, who can smoke, read or do anything he pleases, the whole contrivance being at once so simple and so practicable. Do you all follow me?"

I think our feelings were well expressed by a howl of derision from Flip, Crinkleback's small fox terrier.

"It strikes me the animal has hit public opinion, Crinkleback. I should say it could not be done. It's scarcely possible; Great Scott! it's so new-fangled, you know," said Emanuel, protesting against anything new, like a staunch Briton, in the peculiar tone (it is not an accent, much less a twang; it is a "tone.") that all English University men possess.

"You can but try, Fred. I don't like the notion of a steam paddle on our little river, but I won't go back on the White Man's inventions," said Mohawk, graciously.

"Do try, Fred!" I exclaimed. "It will be all right on smooth water; as for the rapids—well, you can always wade, you know!"

"Oh, it's a grand scheme," continued Mohawk. "You can carry all the kit when we go camping, and all the baskets; but what about portaging, couldn't your cute little boiler do that too?"

Here Flip interrupted by barking at Harry "Canuck."

"Don't throw birch bark at him, Harry," I protested. "Pretty fellow, poor dog!"

"Crink's dog—pretty!" exclaimed Harry "Canuck." "You take care to keep him away from your canoe, old boy, or he'll stop the boiler."

"Look!" said Crinkleback, rapidly making sketches in his note book. "Here's a design for the paddle—see? Here we have the small fire, boiler and reserve coal supply."

"Looks like a soup tureen, doesn't it?" said Emanuel. "Won't it draw too much water and be fearfully heavy?"

"I think not," replied Crinkleback. "Just consider the rate at which we shall be able to travel."

"The Cunarders won't be in it," said Harry. "If the rotten old machine doesn't blow up."

"No fear of that," said Crinkleback, the evening sunlight and the enthusiasm together making his honest, tanned face quite handsome. "You have your steam apparatus perfectly under control ; you hold the handle, the paddle moves at the desired rate, you steer by means of another cord (only necessary now and then), that shifts the wheel above the paddle, you cleave the waters evenly and forcibly ; wishing to stop you simply slacken your cord, turn off your steam and dart ashore. Imagine the ease, the comfort, the saving of labor ; it's grand to contemplate ! I shall sell the patent for America and the old country, by Jove I shall and leave the Bank !"

We all cheered and clapped our hands ; then we packed our baskets, and while the boys were preparing the canoes for the homeward trip, Mohawk and I stood on the bank looking over the river to the quietly stirring maples, black against the glowing warmth of the sky.

Then we were ready, and we paddled away in the stillness ; the gay voices of the others

came back faintly to Emanuel and me as we glided slowly through the water, listening to the myriad insects, watching the sparkle of fire-flies on the bank, and talking of something even more delightful than Crinkleback's canoe.

Oh, happy Canadian days! I float back to them once again, I see the gleam of the paddle held by a lingering hand, I see in the widening circle of the dropping water a glory spread about me, and I see in Emanuel's eyes as we drift along a look that is more than words—quietly, joyously as we drift along towards the brightness of the evening sun.

.
“Where is Crinkleback? That's the question, where is Crinkleback?”

It was the end of August. A deeper blue was in the water and the sky, and we four were at the boathouse once again for an afternoon on the river, Harry “Canuck” whistling, Mohawk arranging our lunch baskets and the Cambridge Man and I on the lookout for my mechanical genius of a cousin.

“I guess he's failed to accomplish his wonderful canoe,” said Harry.

"He must have been made manager of the Bank, and gone to Europe," said Emanuel.

"Oh, no!" broke in Mohawk's musical voice, "Crinkleback and Flip are coming now, only look!"

Yes, along came Crinkleback driving, accompanied by a friend to take the buggy back, with Flip rushing like a mad dog behind and very little of his master to be seen on account of an enormous paddle; yards of cord were on his knees, the boiler and the "small supply of coal" between his feet.

"Here I am!" shouted Crinkleback. "How are you all? Everything finished, it's a grand success; set the paddle working over a chair last night; it's under perfect control; wonderful! Here, Emanuel, take the boiler; mind the dog! Give us a hand, Harry, there's a good fellow." Then Crinkleback and all his apparatus tumbled out of the buggy at once.

He refused any help, saying everything was so simple he could manage quite well by himself, so we launched our canoes and paddled a little way out to give Crinkleback room to start.

First Crinkleback got his boat in the water,

then Flip had to be hauled out of it by the scruff of his neck, then Crinkleback got himself tangled up in the cords, then he had to light his little fire, burnt his fingers and executed a sort of war dance around the boat-house.

"Poor fellow!" Mohawk cried. "Galoot!" Harry exclaimed.

"Oh, I'm tired of waiting," said Emanuel. "I propose that we go on, while you two wait for Fred."

"No," said Harry, "I guess we'll all go on. Say, Crink, we're going on, old man, good-bye. See you at the usual place for tea, when you've got your machinery in order."

So we paddled off, Mohawk leading, Emanuel and I as usual lingering behind, pausing now and again to wait for Fred, until we reached the usual place, where our former discussion on the steam-propelled canoe had been held. Then we landed, ran up the bank and rested beneath the grand old maples, a slight change of colour in their leaves now and the ground bright with patches of golden-rod. It was perfectly delightful; Emanuel threw himself at my feet, I leaned against a birch tree,

closed my eyes, and soon fell from a reverie into a dream.

Suddenly I awakened with a start ; we all sprang forward, for Harry's excited voice came ringing up from the little yellow beach below : " Say, Mohawk, Emanuel, all of you, come down, come down. Here's Crinkleback coming along like an express train, by Gum ! here's Crinkleback ! "

Mohawk was already by his side. Emanuel gave me his hand ; we scrambled down the bank as quickly as we could, and eagerly looked along the river, where Harry pointed to a dark object almost hidden by spray that was simply tearing along. Yes, it was Crinkleback, we could see him plainly sitting in the bow, hanging on the cord with both hands, his dog yelping and barking between the middle thwarts, steam issuing from his boiler in clouds, and his gigantic paddle ploughing the water like the screw of an Atlantic liner.

" He said it would be under perfect control. I'm sure it isn't ! " said Emanuel excitedly.

" Poor old Fred ! " cried Mohawk. " Oh, how it bumps on the stones. "

"He'll be smashed to pieces!" I cried, "I know he will—oh, and the dog, too!"

Nearer and nearer came the canoe, splashing and bumping, the stern quite out of the water, and Crinkleback yelled to us from the bow: "It's—grand—but—it—won't—stop!"

"You'll be killed, Crinkleback!" we all shouted back. "Jump, Crinkleback," and the whole river rang to the words, "Jump, Crinkleback!"

There was a pause, a shout, a splash, and Crinkleback jumped.

We saw him five minutes after, calmly sitting in the shallow water, with rather a faint smile on his countenance.

The wonderful canoe, boiler and all, had reached the land a long way up the river, and we saw the paddle, still paddling itself onward, first over the ground, then high in the air, till it was only a dark speck on the horizon.

.

Three years ago! Three long years since that exciting Canadian summer, and yet we made a strange discovery—Emanuel and I—only yesterday.

I was sitting alone when I had written the last words of the story of Crinkleback's canoe, thinking affectionately of the dark-haired Mohawk, Harry "Canuck" and dear old Fred, when my husband came up behind my chair, and threw a newspaper over my manuscript on the desk.

"What is this, Emanuel?"

"Read it, my dear girl, read it, and I rather think you will guess."

He was laughing heartily, and I read the paragraph aloud:

PARIS, June 18th.—Great excitement was caused in this city this afternoon by the sudden descent of some unknown flying machine on the top of the Eiffel Tower. It struck the summit of the lofty building when a strong wind was blowing from the west, and though the machine was much battered, it was immediately removed to the basement of the tower, and examined by the police authorities.

It is about sixteen to eighteen feet in length, boat shaped, and apparently made of some strong wood. It has evidently suffered greatly from wear and weather. The supposition of its being a flying machine arises from the fact that attached to one side by a wonderful entanglement of cords, is a long, worn out, oar-shaped piece of wood; the other wing must have been lost during its extraordinary perambulations.

The strangest part of all was the discovery of a small skeleton, believed to be of some animal of the canine species, held fast by the thin cords of the machine. Both these interesting objects are now on view, and are daily visited by crowds of cultivated Parisians.

I looked up at Emanuel; he looked down at me.

"That must be," we exclaimed together,
"that *must* be Crinkleback's canoe!"

THE ADVENT OF THE ENGLISHMAN.

A LOVE STORY.

Chris "the Colossal" kicked one shoe off to the right, the other shoe landed upon the bureau, his hat he tossed on a chair and then he sat down, head low, knees apart, hands clasped lightly, to think it out.

The setting sun glowed softly through the white blind, the low hum of numberless insects came to him through the open window, and he was hot and dusty from a long walk in the sultry afternoon.

Chris "the Colossal" was taking the summer lightly, but the English girl puzzled him; the blue, blue skies of Western Ontario; the long lazy days on the river; the evening drives, when refreshing little winds were to be met with; the talks and disputes (Chris' intellect could be labelled truthfully "Immature 22") were all old to him, but the English girl was a novelty, an orchid, an olive—delicate, peculiar, an acquired taste.

To love a thing one should study it, then a hundred little unknown charms appear, the

learning of a language leads one to its books and poetry ; the living in a strange country introduces one to its little customs and graces ; and most of all to take an interest in the alphabet of a character, opens to one the courtly sentences, or at least, the one syllable words.

When Chris and Rosamund (the English girl) had first met, her impression had been of a frank and blue-eyed young fellow, six feet in height, square shouldered, thin and muscular—Chris was like a well cut seal, bound to make a good impression ; Rosamund summed him up in her private diary as “typical”—she didn’t mention of what.

His impression of her was negative ; he objected to eye glasses, and the English girl peeped at life through gold-rimmed little window panes ; he didn’t like green and Rosamund had an aesthetic green dress ; Chris had decided opinions and he was a hustler, Rosamund was shy and didn’t talk—Chris thought her dull and ignored her ; he had never heard of Burne Jones or William Morris, Rosamund thought him ignorant.

That was six weeks ago, our young man had made two discoveries, namely : Rosamund

had a complexion like a blush rose and that she could be funny; our young girl had found out she was not in her element and all her well-meaning Canadian relations wished to pull her into theirs.

A patient aunt might draw a fish out of his element, a skillful uncle might bring a bird down from his, but all the patience and skill (and Uncle and Aunt Wesley, of Mapleville, possessed neither virtue) cannot make a London-bred girl, superficially but strongly interested in the advanced ideas of her time, at home in a small, bustling, self-satisfied Canadian town.

Rosamund enjoyed the beauties of the new world; the days were long delights to her—if her friends had only let her alone, if only the three meals had not found her seated between Chris (who appeared without his coat and with his sleeves rolled half way up his big arms) and her pretty little cousin; then they would ask her to talk, and in spite of all their kindness Rosamund was bored—bored to death.

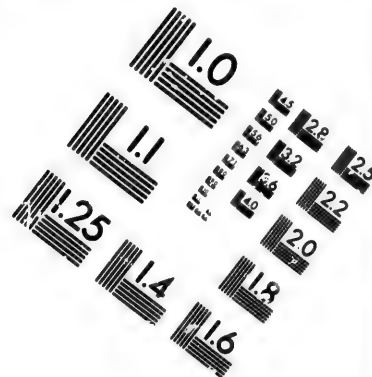
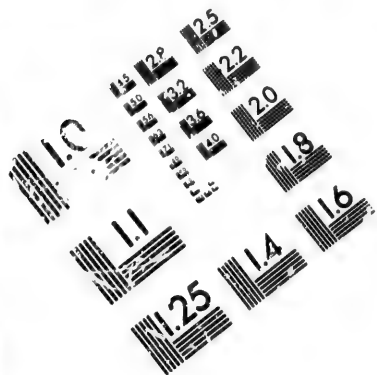
“What is the use,” she bitterly wrote in her diary (Rosamund was a little inclined to exist for the benefit of a diary), “what is the use of all the things I have read? They never care

for anything here but the *Star-Transcript*—where it tells you that ‘our worthy Mayor is around again and some better,’ or ‘Mrs. Somebody is well through house cleaning’—I never see a picture, I never have a talk—its dull ! dull ! I don’t think they like me, I’m so ignorant, I can’t cook, or sew or do fancy work ; I don’t mind which church I go to—how shocked they were when I said I should like to row on Sunday, according to Mapleville laws of morality I ought to be drowned ! Effie only flirts with that empty-headed Spalding man all the afternoon, and I hate Christopher !”

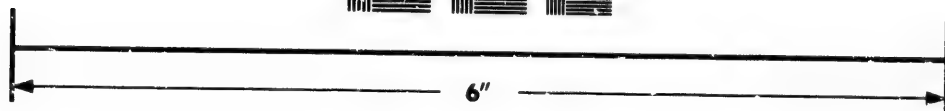
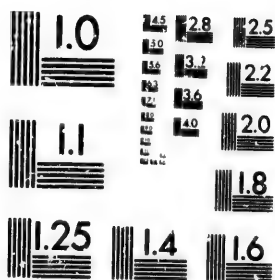
There was some truth in Rosamund’s diary, a great deal in regard to her feeling for Christopher ; his idea of amusement was the tormenting of somebody else, “to get them crazy,” was one of his ambitions, and he soon discovered that the English girl was an easy prey ; if Chris had thrown energy and enthusiasm into athletic sports, into the making of money, he found that this new study of his was intensely interesting.

“Rosamund,” he thought, sitting in his room this July afternoon, “conversation slow, notions stiff ; made her hopping mad to-day ; is there anything on earth so winning





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as a little girl on her dignity? Why doesn't she laugh when all the other girls do? Proud, I guess. Now, the question is," and Chris rubbed up and down his knees and slowly whistled a few bars of a two-step, "the question is, shall I get at the drift of little Cherry Cheek or not? I'd like to wake her up, I'd like to get her wild, or make her talk or something, she's a cold little girl alright—I guess I'll go and scare her up a little."

And with this amiable intention Chris made himself presentable and ran down stairs humming "Onward Christian Soldiers."

Little Cherry Cheek was sitting at the piano in the parlour reading an accompaniment with a persistence worthy of a better cause; her hands were laboriously hunting for the correct keys, and her wavy, soft hair seemed to caress the little throat and broad forehead, the first or the second scrutiny of Rosamund didn't interest one, but the third and fourth left an impression of health and bloom and brightness.

Chris pulled a rocking chair beside the piano, and glanced up and down from the sheet of music to the keys with rapid anxiety.

Rosamund hesitated, grew confused and clasped her fingers in her lap.

"Don't stop irritating the piano on my account!" said Chris. "I like it, it's so rattling!"

"Thank you, I was only practising, I was just going to leave off."

Chris lazily pushed the stool against the other side of the piano and kept his hand upon it, so that Rosamund was imprisoned, and turning her back to the keys, she favoured him with a long and curious inspection. They never held a conversation, in lively moments Chris was rather like a young bear in a drawing room and in his serious moods he resembled the same animal, muzzled.

"Let me pass, Christopher." Rosamund was too polite to show any annoyance.

"The maple leaf," said Christopher, fixing his eyes on the ceiling, "is our national emblem, combined with the beaver—"

"I have a letter to write before supper—please."

"Consequently," said Christopher, still holding the stool, "maple syrup (adulterated) and the beaver (boiled) are our national dishes."

If the girl wanted to pass, why didn't she push his hand away, but it would never have entered Rosamund's mind to do anything half as undignified.

"I want to ask you something, Rosamund, what do you think now honestly about all of us? You don't like our crowd, do you?"

She nervously jerked her eye-glasses between her thumb and finger and didn't answer; Christopher's laughing blue eyes searched her face.

"Spalding now," he continued, "he is pretty nice, isn't he? Tell me, do you like Spalding?"

"Yes."

"He isn't a bad coon; he's all right! He knows a good deal more than people think."

"And less," said Rosamund.

"By ginger! That's true," said Christopher, "I wish, my dear girl, you would give us your honest opinion of Spalding's intellect—don't move—he thinks you are cute, I know he does. Say, Rosamund, don't girls discuss fellows in England?"

"I don't know."

"Say, Rosamund, I'm your cousin, ain't I?"

"No."

"I'm Effie's cousin, and you are her cousin, so you must be my cousin."

"Really?"

"What does that mean? See here, Rosie—"

"I beg your pardon."

"Oh! don't apologize." Rosamund objected to being called Rosie, which Chris knew.

"See here, Rosie, why don't you talk, this is like a cross examination, it ought to be like, like—"

"Anthony Hope?" said Rosamund.

"Who's he?" said Chris. "Never met the gentleman. Why don't you talk?"

"Oh! I don't know!"

At that minute Frank Spalding appeared on the scene; he lived with the Wesleys and Rosamund could never dissociate Spalding the man, from Spalding the boarder. Frank Spalding was a young druggist, and Rosamund thought in her own mind how nice he would have looked in a fancy glass bottle on a shelf in his own store; he was a neat, thin young man with good teeth and a little moustache, somewhat delicate and dapper and a trifle too much engrossed in his personal appearance; he had never been out of Mapleville and (happy

young druggist) never wished to go out of Mapleville.

Rosamund greeted Spalding with a bright smile, Chris moved back and she perversely seated herself again on the stool—Chris got up and walked to the door, there he turned and looked at Rosamund for a second, with a world of tender admiration in his face, she responded by a blank stare, Chris transformed the look to one of supreme disgust, flung it at the unconscious Spalding and lounged against the porch of the verandah; do what he would the English girl haunted his mind; he thought of her self-possession chiefly, her entire indifference to his, or any man's patronage; there was the puzzle, she could not talk ten minutes with him alone without an obvious shyness, yet she discussed subjects, with sense and humour, that were Greek to our backwoods boy; she was intensely surprised at an invitation to paddle on the river with Spalding, yet she brought herself across the Atlantic without the shadow of a chaperon. Had she any friends in Mapleville? No, the girls were constrained in her quiet presence, the boys found her dull—except a young teacher at the high school, he

spent one long afternoon reading Emerson with Rosamund ; she expressed her pleasure in this little friendship with the only touch of enthusiasm Christopher had ever seen her display ; the following week one of the Mapleville ladies (a person with a mind and bonnet to match—cheap and showy) ventured to banter Rosamund on her conquest.

“ You must think me an observer, Miss Wesley,” said the lady.

“ No, I certainly do not,” said Miss Wesley, and displayed one of her awful accomplishments, she sat still with her eyes gazing into vacancy, and an awkward pause ensued ; her aunt afterwards said Rosamund was rude, the girl coloured and in future ignored the unfortunate high school teacher.

Christopher was still leaning his broad shoulders against the porch, when Spalding came out of the parlour following Rosamund, she walked up-stairs, he stopped beside Chris.

“ I can’t talk to the girl,” he said, kicking the step with the heel of his yellow boot. “ She never helps a man out ! ”

“ She seems to have turned him out,” said Christopher, “ where has she gone ? ”

"Oh, to study the solar system, I guess."

"Did she say so?"

"Does she ever say anything except ringing the changes between 'Yes' and 'No' and 'Really.' I tell you what it is, Chris, you can never begin with her where you leave off."

"Then don't leave off," said Chris in a parenthesis.

"She was quite chummy with me last night and to-day she won't speak."

The idea of Rosamund being "chummy," amused Christopher, it must have been a chumminess that freezes.

Rosamund wrote that night in her diary: "Our amiable friend Christopher is endeavouring to study my character, I know he is; now I wonder just how much he likes me? I try to puzzle him, oh! I'm a hypocrite! I pretend to be ignorant of everything and he kindly enlightens me! Bah! he is so simple and boyish and good and manly.

"The dreary, beautiful summer days go on—I want to get away, I'm tired, tired of everyone. How can I say I'm homesick, it would be cruel when they all mean to be kind—I'm tired of the silly talk and the lazy days. I want London, I

want the sound, the life, the soul—I want to be free, to do what I like, to talk or be quiet as I like—I am imprisoned here, they give me all they can but—the old cry—I'm bored, bored!

“Christopher? Christopher—is—a—possibility. Was I ever in love, he asked me, and *of course* I said no; all men are simple if you know how to take them; I never mind imposing on men, they have the best of it in this life, so they ought to do something for us. Poor old Christopher—fool!”

Having looked so far at Rosamund's diary (a really private diary), we may be justified in reading the following disconnected words that were blotted and blurred—Christopher was under the impression, by the way, that Rosamund was entirely gentle and artless and that she never cried—

“Oh! those long days in the park, down the flower path, if I could only see you, best of friends! If I could only hear from you, only once, if you knew, if you knew! Shall I write to him? Shall I dare? To-day I might have been—oh! it's no use thinking about it; I can wait and wait and hope—come to me; dear

eyes, kind voice, true heart—come ! come ! ”

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Rosamund hoped on, but hope is like bread, it is the staff of life, but it's hard to live on nothing else.

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The summer drifted on ; golden rod, the fire of the fall, burnt gorgeously in Mapleville, and the trees, pink, yellow and crimson, glowed against the deep skies of September.

That year a golden chance came to Christopher, he thought it over, and seized his opportunity. One day he started for New York, with a business prospect before him that taxed the literary ability of the reporter on *The Star-Transcript* to describe with sufficient brilliancy.

“Good-bye, little Rosie,” said Christopher, and he held her two hands in his and smiled down at her with his eye brows drawn closely together and half-closed eyes—a trick of his, though he had the sight of a bird.

Rosamund discreetly withdrew her left hand and said,

"Good-bye, Chris."

"Don't you wish me good luck? Won't you look at me?"

Rosamund raised her eyes and smiled kindly.

"Ah, do take those things off, Rosamund, I've never had a good look at your eyes," and Chris stretching out his hand to remove her "eternal glasses," touched her cheek; Rosamund flashed a frown at him and drew back a step.

"I didn't touch you, Rosamund, it wouldn't kill you if I had!"

"Good-bye," said the girl again, and she walked into the house. Chris remembered her promise to go to the station, he wheeled around and caught her by the arm. The colour rushed to her face and she tried vainly to get away, but Chris held her hand straight down by her side in his, so that she was perforce leaning against his shoulder.

"Let me go, Christopher, let me go!"

"Will you come to the station?"

"No."

"Will you write to me, will you?"

"No."

Pulling her nearer he begged her again and again to write to him, till his blue eyes grew dangerous, and Rosamund instinctively knew that the time had come for diplomacy.

"Let me go, Christopher, and I will—"

"Yes."

"Write—to—" Christopher loosened his hold and Rosamund fled up-stairs without a backward look; Chris stood for two minutes, pondering a certain vague question that had only just occurred to him; then he looked at his watch, dismissed the question with a straightening of the eye-brows and an action with his closed hand as if he were knocking something from him, and for many a week Mapleville knew him no more.

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"What do you think of Canada now?" said the station agent at Little Drummond to Rosamund Wesley, as he replenished the ugly stove, then stood warming himself before it; the station agent was an untidy weak-eyed and weak-kneed young man, and the effect of an appalling storm on the mind of a Britisher interested him. Rosamund was returning from

an eastern city to spend Christmas at Maple-ville, and the prospect of being snow bound at Little Drummond railway station, for an indefinite period, was not a cheering one. There were two or three commercial travellers, a few young men in high boots and draggled fur coats, a lady with several little boys, their small heads enveloped in Persian lamb caps, and the English girl in the waiting room.

"D' you think it's clearing, Jimmy?" asked one of the travellers.

"No, it ain't," said the ticket agent, and everyone looked out of the window at the driving snow; it was falling like a soft veil over the country, all the trees and fences had lost their shape in the whiteness, and the railway line was not to be distinguished from the platform.

"Where's our train, Jimmy?" asked the traveller, "why don't you 'phone?"

"Why don't I which?" said the ticket agent, and he went into his own stuffy little office and rang the telephone bell,—the telegraph wires were down.

"Hello!" shouted the ticket agent, "is that you, Jack? Yes—no! Oh! she's in a

snow drift, is she? What's that? No foolin'—when do you think she'll get out of the drift? Not till the plough goes along, eh? What's that? I wish I was!—Ha! Ha!—What's that?—let 'er whirl—alright!" ringing off the distant jack.

Rosamund tapped her foot impatiently on the floor; she was only eight miles from Mapleville and imprisoned here!

She tried to read but it wearied her, she got up and looked absently out into the feathery flurry, she assisted one of the little boys who was being extinguished by his Persian lamb cap, and then she stood by the stove and commenced to read a letter that she held in her muff.

At the first page of the letter (the envelope bore the Mapleville post mark, but the letter was written on thick, plain English note paper) Rosamund longed for the train to come, at the second page she speculated on the possibility of driving; at the third she wondered whether she could walk the eight miles, and at the fourth she tried not to smile, then she returned to her seat in the corner and read the letter all over again.

Suddenly through the quietude of the afternoon there jingled on the air the merry sound of bells ; nearer and nearer they rang, and briskly they clashed together as a cutter came to a halt at the back of the station and in a few seconds the snow was being stamped from a pair of heavy boots outside, the waiting room door opened and a big man came in.

Chris was colossal indeed in his great fur coat and gauntlets ; he pulled his cap off and came towards Rosamund with out-stretched hand and heightened colour.

"Why, Chris !" said Rosamund, and she smiled at him with frank pleasure and surprise. "I didn't dream of seeing you. Can you—can you take me to Mapleville ?" Chris brushed the snow off his boots with the universal broom provided for the purpose.

"I came on purpose, shall we go ?"

"Did you really ? Yes, yes !" Rosamund fastened her coat eagerly, put her glasses straight on her nose with two fingers and looked up at him, with her eyes dancing and her lips breaking into a laugh ; he had never thought her so winning.

"Come along then !" They left the wait-

ing room and plodded their way through the snow to where the cutter stood ; the flurry was passing over and Rosamund was quickly muffled in robes and jingling away from the Little Drummond station.

"An' I hope they get pitched out anyway !" said the ticket agent.

Cold and biting air, rushes of glorious wind, a heaven of gray clouds laden with snow, a world of dazzling, sparkling whiteness ! Chris flourished his whip over his head and laughed his great genial laugh, then he bent to put the furs more closely around Rosamund and to look long, long into her face. He gathered up her two hands in one of his and put them beneath the robe ; he was alone with her, he felt her gentle presence, she had never smiled so brightly, he had never been so happy—poor Chris, Rosamund wanted to get to Mapleville, and she smiled on him with as personal a feeling as she would have smiled on the train, if it had reached Little Drummond an hour earlier.

"How long will it take us, do you think ?" she asked, looking at him with happy eyes—he never hated her glasses so much before.

"Not more than eight hours, I guess."

"No!"

"You wait till you see the pitch holes Rosamund, I could hardly get here myself and it will be worse getting back."

"Why will it be worse?"

"Two hundred pounds more weight in the cutter!"

"I weigh a hundred and sixteen," Rosamund replied.

"Do you!" said Chris "the Colossal," "I weigh a hundred and seventeen, I must train down a pound next summer!"

Rosamund laughed, and Chris whistled "Jingle Bells."

Soon Little Drummond, with its small houses half buried in snow, was behind them, and they were slowly making their way along the road that was only to be followed by the telegraph poles. A little wind was hurrying behind, and occasionally a lump of snow would fly up against them from the horses' hoofs.

"How goes the world at Mapleville?" for a wonder it was Rosamund who spoke first.

"I've only been home a week," said Chris, "and everything is elegant. I'm boarding at

the Queen's, you know ; I'm tony, Rosamund, you bet !”

Chris hoped that she would ask him about himself and his winter's success. After a pause, she said :

“ Why did you come for me this afternoon ? Tell me.”

“ Oh, just 'cos !” said Christopher.

“ That's no reason, did anybody suggest it to you ?”

“ No, I didn't tell a soul I was coming. Say, Rosamund, sometimes a fellow can't wait, he just has to go !”

“ Where ?” said Rosamund, on the anxious look out for pitch holes ; the fences were scarcely to be seen and the horses were working hard.

Christopher didn't answer, and Rosamund wondered what he was thinking about, as he looked ahead with the old trick of drawing the brows together. They were silent for some minutes, and then—

“ I do like sleighing, Christopher !”

“ And I love sleighing, Rosamund !”

She turned quickly to look at him, for a change in his voice for a second puzzled her—

“ Do you, really ?”

"Just now—better than anything else on earth, Rosamund!"

If Chris could see the dips and dangers of the road before them, Rosamund could more clearly foresee the words that might be spoken; she gravely studied his face as he bent towards her; why had he ever made her miserable? Why had she ever disliked him? Then she suddenly dropped her eyes and a hundred thoughts chased through her mind—the old homesickness of the summer, the unspoken longing for one face, one voice and now! now!

"Chris!" said Rosamund, "I'm glad you came to Little Drummond, I'm very grateful, you were always kind to me."

"I used to plague you, Rosamund."

Her eager thoughts were already at Maple-ville and he wondered, in his turn, what beauty she could see in the changeless road in front of them.

"I'll never tease you again, Rosamund, upon my honour!"

"I don't care if you do—when you get the chance!"

"You little puzzle! Haven't I the chance

now? Can't I make you more mad than you ever were?"

"I think not."

"May I try, Rosamund?"

"Look at your horses, Chris!"

"May I try, may I try once?"

"Chris, we shall be over!"

"May I try? It's all right, Rosie!"

But Christopher was too late, he had forgotten everything while he stooped towards Rosamund, and as he spoke his team plunged forward, just a thought too far to the right, and Rosamund, robes and all were neatly tossed into a feathery drift.

When the English girl jumped up, she found Chris had pushed the cutter back to its right position, and the weary horses were standing still, with drooping heads and snow-flecked manes.

"I'm coming!" said Rosamund, picking up her cap, and eye-glasses that were dangling from her chain.

"Stop, Rosamund, I'll lift you in."

"No, indeed, you will not."

"Are you hurt, Rosamund?"

"No, thank you."

"Don't thank me, it was a pleasure! We must hustle, my dear, or the poor brutes will fall down!"

While Rosamund was looking pitifully at the weary horses, Chris strode up and lifted her in his arms.

"You little bird!" he said, and Rosamund, angry as she was, felt that to struggle would have been most undignified, so she allowed Chris to put her into the cutter, and after an icy "thank you," she relapsed into silence, waiting for him to apologize; but unfortunately it didn't enter Chris' head to apologize, and he only wondered stupidly why the drive had grown so gloomy.

At their first meeting it had been so easy to laugh and exchange those lightning glances, but now Chris was drifting back into the feeling of the summer; if Rosamund had come out of her shell at all, she was certainly safely back in it again.

Christopher was perplexed; in the old days she had always interested, but often annoyed him, during the last hour she had given him pain; for the first time in his life he lost his

self-confidence--he was actually afraid of his little Cherry Cheek.

"Rosamund," he said, after a full half hour of silence, "are you happy in Canada? Do you get lonesome sometimes for your old country?"

Had she been asked such a question six months before, her eyes would have filled with tears, but now her very sensitiveness had grown into a hard wall to shield her.

"No, I am never lonely, it's a waste of energy."

"But, Rosamund, you told me once you were horribly lonely."

"Yes," said Rosamund, quickly, "and *you* answered that it would do me good; that was kind, wasn't it?"

"It was too bad, I'm very sorry, Rosamund, upon my word I am. Say! You forgive me, don't you?"

"Of course, it didn't matter." This time the young lady banged the door of her shell, figuratively speaking, and left Christopher outside; it's an uncomfortable position to be outside anyone's shell.

The gray afternoon was wearing away and

it was growing bitterly cold and dreary ; they had taken to the fields and occasionally their cutter would almost overturn in the soft, uneven drifts ; the air was singularly still and no sound was heard, but the jingle of the bells and the sou ! sou ! of the horses' feet.

Chris often looked at his companion and once he drew her towards him with one strong arm and the words, " You'll be a little icicle, Rosie, if I don't keep you warm," but he didn't attempt to talk again.

Rosamund fell into a delightful day dream ; the Canadian snow melted into a London fog, she was looking at its denseness from the windows of her home ; the gas lamps were like small blurred yellow stars, and through the dingy panes she could see the dark shapes of people and carriages, blindly passing backwards and forwards.

Behind her was the glow of a grate fire and she was not alone in her day-dream (one never is !) for she heard never-to-be-forgotten words at her ear, and she turned her eyes at last to the shadowy face that she remembered so well.

" I can see the home lights !" cried Christopher, and never was a happy dream more

happily turned into reality. Rosamund didn't speak for a minute and then she asked abruptly—

"Chris, I wonder whether you have met some one named Turner at Mapleville?"

Chris was just driving from a field into the high road and he answered,

"What's that? A man named Turner? Why, yes—he and I travelled from New York together last week, do you know him?"

"Yes, I know him."

"He's not half a bad sort of chap, though he didn't speak till we got to Buffalo, kind of still-necked, you know. What's he doing here, Rosamund, what's he after?"

"I really do not know what Mr. Turner is 'after,'" said Rosamund—her voice was supremely indifferent.

"He's an Englishman, you know, well built, handsome sort of boy, isn't he? But as independent as a pig on ice!"

"What do you mean?" said Rosamund.

"Oh, you know, cool; if I can't walk said the pig, I'll slide—that's your Englishman all over!"

This comparison of her countryman seemed

to amuse Rosamund, for some reason she laughed more gaily than Chris had thought it possible, her demure eyes fairly danced.

"How happy you look, Rosie, laugh again!"

"I am very happy, Chris, can't you see it?"

"Because you are near Mapleville?"

"Yes."

"I felt like that, Rosamund, when I got near to Little Drummond."

Rosamund was not interested.

"Exactly like that," Chris continued, "for I just wanted to see you, and you looked so pretty in your little cap, just the prettiest little—"

"Home at last!" cried Rosamund, actually clapping her hands as they drove down the first irregular street. Christopher mentally decided he had talked "like a silly fool" all the way, but somehow his disappointment was touched with a vague delight, the unsettled question he had asked himself, when he parted from this girl in the early fall, was being answered for him.

He slowly turned to Rosamund; had she seen the new light in his eyes she would have realized that Christopher was no longer merely

a "possibility;" but Rosamund's whole mind was absorbed in anxious expectation—even being in love was not unalloyed bliss.

They jingled down the main street, around the market square, they passed Frank Spalding, in the neatest of cutters, with the young lady who was the future owner of his heart and drugs, and at last the Wesley's house was before them and Rosamund became conscious of Christopher.

"I am so glad you fetched me, Chris," she said, "how can I thank you?"

"Just by recollecting I'm alive," said Christopher, and he pulled his team up at the door of the house.

Ten minutes after that he was driving away at full speed, and Rosamund was realizing how kind and cordial a Canadian welcome can be.

Chris wanted to be alone; he left the horses at the livery stable and walked to the Queen's Hotel.

"Can't I get any supper, Charlie?" he said to the clerk, as he took off his fur coat in the hall.

"I guess," said the clerk, "there's Mr.

Turner only just come in and he's getting a lunch, so you can go in at once."

Christopher walked into the dining room; the Englishman was sitting by the stove, and Chris took a seat at the opposite end of his table.

"Hello, Turner," said Chris.

"Oh, how are you?" said the Englishman.

He spoke very slowly, this Englishman, and the light from the one lamp fell on his face and showed its clearly cut, dark features; his eyes were as honest as Christopher's own, but their expression was soft and gentle; he smiled very rarely, but when he did so he showed a perfect set of small, white teeth; his mouth was somewhat small, but his chin was square and determined; a cool, self-contained fellow, this Englishman, difficult to know, and as unprejudiced and free from pride as it was possible for one of his conservative nation to be.

There was silence for about ten minutes, while Christopher and Turner mutually "wrestled" with the heavy viands of the light lunch; then the Canadian felt some of his natural vivacity returning to him. He asked Turner what he thought of Mapleville, the Englishman said

he liked it very well—his voice was particularly soft and winning.

"Are you acquainted here at all?" asked Chris.

"I happen to know some of your people," answered Turner, "at least I introduced myself to them this afternoon—the Wesleys, awfully nice people they are, too."

Christopher then remembered that Rosamund had spoken to him of Turner during the drive; it reminded him of the upset, and of how he had lifted Rosamund into the cutter; he smiled at the recollection, drumming his fingers on the table and with his chair tilted back. Turner's hands were deep in his pockets and his head was bent low.

"I guess you're acquainted with Miss Rosamund Wesley anyway?" asked Christopher. He spoke her name carelessly enough and Turner answered as carelessly.

"Yes, I met her in London, you know."

"You'll find her quite a little Canadian by this time."

"Shall I?" the Englishman got up and turned towards the door, his manner implied an ending of the subject.

Christopher rose, he was annoyed, and angry with himself for showing it.

"She's dead struck on Mapleville, too!" he said. The Englishman shrugged his shoulders but didn't answer. Christopher's eye ran over his figure; yes, he had spoken the truth, Greville Turner was well worth powder and shot, though only of middle height he was broad shouldered, deep-chested, and well-developed. Chris didn't understand the impulse that made him fling these words after the other man:

"Rosamund is in town now, I drove her over from Little Drummond this afternoon."

Turner wheeled around and looked at him.

"Is it possible?" he said, and then he greatly surprised Chris by clapping him on the back. "That was awfully kind of you, old man;" his hand went back to his pocket and he walked out of the dining room without another word.

Christopher went to his own room to "think it out,"—an invariable habit of his to reach a decision from which he never wavered.

"Rosamund! Rosamund!" he muttered, pacing up and down; then he sat down in his old attitude, with clasped hands, thinking,

thinking of Rosamund. The long Christmas days were before him and all the future was a brilliant dream.

"I think," said Chris the "Colossal," drawing a long deep breath, "I think—I will go—and ask that English girl—to marry me."

.

Greville Turner was rarely in a hurry, when he left the dining room he leisurely looked at his watch before putting on his overcoat and hat.

"I must really get some furs if I stay in this beastly country," he thought as he passed into the street. He turned up his collar and started at a good round pace. It soon became quicker and quicker.

"What an impatient fool I am!" and he laughed at himself; would the house never appear? Oh, you running Englishman! Who shall say whether you will find her alone?

When he reached the Wesleys at last, he caught the sound of someone playing the piano indifferently well—it was Rosamund, she was sitting in the parlour alone. When she heard Turner's sharp ring at the door she con-

tinued playing but she turned her head and listened.

She heard her cousin's light step along the hall, the click of the lock and the mingling of voices. Rosamund's hands trembled so much that she could scarcely strike the notes. The parlour door was open but the position of the piano prevented her seeing into the hall; she heard Turner say something in a low voice to her cousin, who laughed, answered in a whisper, and tripped away; he was left standing in the hall alone.

Rosamund's fingers dropped from the keys, she stood up with her hand resting on the top of the piano, her figure bending forward—from head to foot a vision of expectant joy.

Turner came into the room quickly, for one second he did not see her—sweetest second, to be so near and in a flash of thought to realize the next!

“Rosie!”

“Greville!”

“Did you think I should never come?”

“Greville! Greville!”

Turner put out his foot and kicked the door, it closed upon them and Rosamund laid her two

hands on his shoulders and looked into his face ; she dared not trust herself to speak, her deep eyes were full of tears, her lips were parted in a smile, a beautiful colour flushed her cheeks.

Through the frosty air, with a quick and decided step, Christopher was rapidly nearing the house, he looked up at the bright clear stars, he felt all the beauty of the night and he longed to speak to Rosamund ; no one else in the world would understand him now—if Christopher could have heard her voice at that minute !

"I can't talk to you. I should say too much, Greville."

"Only say you expected me !"

"Yes, when I had your letter."

"Rosie ! Not before then ? I told you I would never take 'no' for an answer."

Turner's square chin did not belie him ; if Rosamund at times did not dare, if Christopher on occasion did not dare, the Englishman dared and did.

"Dear !" said Greville, "Love ! Have you missed me ? But you look so happy, love."

"*Now !*" said Rosamund, and she clasped her hands around his neck and whispered "Greville ! Greville !"

Turner dared again, he actually took off Rosamund's eyeglasses and tossed them on the table.

"They are always in the way, dear love!" said the Englishman.

.
When Christopher reached the house he opened the door and walked in without ringing; how bright and warm it was after the cold night air, a cheery feeling of home came over him, and he heard Rosamund's voice, speaking eagerly, more decidedly than was her wont.

"The whole crowd is in there, I suppose," he thought, and opened the parlour door; at the same minute a hand was laid on his arm and Effie Wesley (kindest of cousins) told him to stop.

Tableau! Rosamund sprang from her chair with all her well-hidden love and delight in her face; Christopher's eyes grew hard and wondering and still. The Englishman was the only one of the party who was unembarrassed, he had one hand on Rosamund's wrist, and he still held it as Christopher stood at the door. Rosamund scarcely felt his light touch, but to Chris-

topher it expressed all of Turner's right and power; he turned and shut the door behind him. The cousin laughed, the Englishman smiled, but Rosamund stood, tracing a pattern on the floor with her foot; she gave one little sigh before she said:

"I almost wish, Greville, that we had not kept our secret quite so well—why *did* we, Greville?"

Christopher went into the dining-room and began to talk to the Wesleys about his life in New York. He listened to the coming of the Englishman patiently enough, but he was in one of his last summer moods and laughed and talked for an hour, then he bade them good night and went away.

"Chris!" he turned at the gate and saw Rosamund in the doorway, the red glow from the hall stove falling on her figure, "You'll wait a minute and walk down with Greville?"

"But I've always gone alone, Rosamund."

"Yes, but having the Englishman makes a difference."

"I can't wait," said Christopher, "Good-bye, Rosamund."

"Good night, Chris."

"I said good-bye, Rosamund."

"Well, good-bye," she waved her hand gaily ; all her heart was gay with Greville near her.

Christopher turned his face up to the dreary sky as he walked quickly along. A light wind whistled through the frosty boughs of the maples ; the streets were sombre and still, the cold bleak air chilled him to the bone, and he felt the loneliness of that winter night for many and many a day.

OUR GREAT AUNT'S EYE.

Every family owns a joke.

There are public jokes and private jokes, in the same way that there are public ghosts and private ghosts, but a joke has an advantage over a ghost in that it is easier to keep; one can't exactly possess a ghost unless one has a fit habitation for it—a ruined castle or ancient tower for instance—but every household, however small, can have two things all of its very own, a skeleton in a convenient cupboard and a traditional joke.

I once heard of a man who spent his whole life in visiting at house after house, and trying to understand family jokes, but it was a dismal failure; you have to be born into a joke, to laugh at it from your cradle, and you have to believe in it, too.

That is the trouble with the story of my great aunt's eye; the younger branches of our family refuse to believe in it. They have not seen the old lady, they have not seen the eye, and they bring the absurd argument to bear

upon the rest of us that photography was only in its infancy at the eventful time of which I write; in fact they use the vulgar expression that the whole story is all in our great aunt's eye, which is literally the exact truth.

It must be about twenty years ago when our great aunt came to live with us. I shall never forget the afternoon of her arrival; my brother Chumley was stationed at the sitting room window with his camera, all ready for an instantaneous photograph of the stepping of our rich relation out of a four-wheeler.

Chumley was devoted to the art of photography; he revelled in a damp wine cellar for a dark room; he was steeped in chemicals, and the negatives that he spoilt monthly were proofs of his enthusiasm.

Our great aunt was not prepossessing, and I think that Chumley's attempt at her likeness was extremely successful—he got in the cab, the back of the horse, and our respected relative's boots, larger than life.

She was a short old lady, with a remarkable head of hair, quite gray at the back, and with a fringe that could be lifted bodily from the scalp in front, a face that was a perfect map of

London in wrinkles, and a fixed, shining, not-to-be-mistaken glass-eye.

In fact, as my father once touchingly observed of our great aunt, everything about her was false, except her heart, and that was in its right place.

Did this prevent Chumley from taking her photograph? No, he dodged (to use his own words), her little peculiarities and our rich relation took a great fancy to him; he was a good-looking, obliging fellow, and he treated her with almost jocular affection; he called her "Auntie dear" to her face, and "Old Timbers" or "The Ancient Mariner" behind her back.

"You see, Ned," said Chumley to me, "I have a grand idea slowly developing itself in my brain connected with our great aunt, so I mean to keep in with her at any cost."

"If your grand idea depends on a camera, I haven't much faith in it," said I.

"Wait and see," said Chumley. "If I fail it will be my own loss, and if I succeed it will mean the monetary making and social advancement of the whole family."

Chumley became a man of one idea; he devoted every Saturday afternoon and all his

evenings to his invention ; he ignored the dark room and he neglected us all, except our great aunt, whom he courted and waited upon like a sixteenth century youth with Queen Elizabeth. He simply devoured the catalogues, amateur magazines and anything and everything connected with photography.

At one time I had been his constant comrade and helper and I asked no questions now, knowing well that Chumley was unable to keep a secret up to the last day ; as his invention neared perfection he would become more and more anxious to reveal it ; and so it turned out to be, but it was not I that he first confided in, it was our rich relation ; it was not my sympathetic abuse he sought, it was an old lady's flattery ; it was not my hand grip of congratulation he won, it was the beams of pleasure from our great aunt's glass-eye.

"Hang Old Timbers!" exclaimed Chumley one evening, sitting alone with me, and with his great invention in a wooden box between his knees.

"Hang Old Timbers ! My boy, she's taken it into her noddle to be offended."

I was a little surprised, and I entreated my brother to tell me about it.

"I appeal to you," said Chumley. "On your honour now, would anybody take our great aunt's glass-eye for a real one?" Chumley called it "a crockery optic."

"No, Chummy," I returned, "it isn't weak like her other one, but it's glass, of course, you can see through it."

"Very well, then, need she be in a raging passion because *I* saw through it? Seventy years old and as conceited as a girl."

"But what has this got to do with your invention, Chummy?"

"Everything, my boy, everything. Is it an awful affliction to have a glass-eye? Can it be concealed?"

"A green patch," I hinted.

"Don't be a fool," said Chumley. "Who likes to wear a green patch? No, I have come to the conclusion that it cannot be concealed. Under any circumstances it cannot be ornamental, so why not make it useful?"

"What do you mean?" I asked. "How could that be done?"

"It has been done, for I have done it," said

Chumley, and he proceeded to unpack the wooden box between his knees, taking from it first a great quantity of paper, then some cotton wool, then a small square leather bag, wrapped around with a piece of black velvet. I could not conceal my curiosity, and I watched him with the closest attention opening the leather bag. He produced from it, with the tenderest care, a tiny polished round wooden case, with several bright little screws about it, a lilliputian concertina as it were at one side, and a square of glass, about the size of a three-penny piece, on the other. A sudden idea flashed through my head.

"Chumley," I exclaimed, "is it—"

"Yes," said Chumley, holding his invention in the palm of his hand. "It's the smallest camera in the world, Ned; it's as perfect as the biggest, and it's meant to be used in the place of our great aunt's false eye."

I stared at my brother with the surprise and admiration that such an announcement deserved.

"You see," he continued, "what a great scheme it is; this little camera is perfectly painless to wear; it can only be used for one

negative at a time at present, but I hope to improve on it later on ; and it could be taken out and slipped into the eye socket again by the smallest child."

"But how does it take the photograph?" I asked.

"That is easily explained. The prepared plate is fixed behind the lens, and the person wearing this camerascopic eye (good name, Ned, d'ye think?) keeps the eyelid closed till the right minute, then opens it once quickly or slowly, according to the exposure needed, and the deed is done. Think of the benefit to all classes of society," continued Chumley, warming with his subject. "An artist for instance has an accident, loses an eye, invests in one of our cameras, is able to continue his work, and take the sweetest little pictures in the world just by the turn of an eyelid. Respectable business man has an accident, loses an eye, buys a camerascopic substitute, enters the police force, and can't you see how invaluable he would be as a private detective?"

"But my dear Chummy," said I, "all the accidents in the world do not result in people losing their eyes—our great aunt for example,

the only person we know who could use your invention, doesn't seem to jump at it."

Chumley never could endure opposition, and he almost broke the little invention because I dared to express a less enthusiastic opinion than his own.

"You leave the old lady to me," he said, "and by Jove! if I don't have my camerascopic eye in her antiquated head in less than a week, I'll throw up the sponge and smash my camera."

Chumley had a violent temper, but he bottled it up and corked it down for the next few days. He fairly "truckled" to our visitor, and the evident displeasure of the old lady at his discovery of her unfortunate glass-eye, began to give way under the influence of his dutiful manners.

Chumley, seeing success in the future, worked himself up into a perfect frenzy of excitement, and the arguments and persuasions that he brought to bear on our great aunt were edifying in the extreme. I used to hear them discussing the matter, and observed how smartly he overruled her many objections.

"My dear, I shall look so ridiculous,"

she would say, "with one eyelid perpetually closed."

"Ridiculous!" cried Chumley. "As if you *could* look ridiculous. Think of the delight to us both if it's a success, aunt."

"What delight would it be to me, my dear?"

"Popularity, aunt!" said Chumley. "Fame! Notoriety! Of course I shall patent the invention, and by Jove, aunt, we'll have your portrait on every advertisement—"The advanced lady who first wore our camerascopic eye!"

Our great aunt began to relent, and after another week of objections overcome, and ridicule suppressed, Chumley was conqueror of the field and had made terms with the enemy; the old lady consented to try the diminutive camera once and Chumley arranged to take a grand family group, and test his perfected camerascopic eye.

The great afternoon arrived, bright and sunny; Chumley pulled and pushed us all into position and then retired to bring forth the heroine of the hour. Our great aunt was visibly excited, and her one closed eyelid over the invention, which

fitted admirably, gave her a jocular not to say rakish appearance.

"What are you laughing at?" said Chumley, "Pray, pray, sit still and don't spoil it all. Now, auntie dear, let me get you into focus. There!" placing her about six feet away from the grinning family group. "Don't be nervous. I shall only give them a short exposure; raise the eyelid smartly when I say one, and close it when I say two; now then, are you ready? One! Two!"

Chumley simply rushed at the old lady a second after, and caught her in his arms.

"You darling old auntie!" he exclaimed, "I didn't dare look at you, I was too excited; but you're a brick, and I'll never worry you again."

Ten minutes later, he and I were alone in the damp wine cellar, developing the smallest negative in the world.

"I hope it's good! I hope it's good!" said Chumley, holding the little pan of developer under the red lamp, with trembling hands, and shaking it gently backwards and forwards.

"Even if it isn't, old boy," said I, "it's a wonderful invention."

"Oh! hold your tongue a minute;" said Chumley, "I can see it coming, by Jove! I can see it coming!"

He elbowed me aside, and I waited impatiently behind, expecting every second to hear a cry of triumph. What was my amazement when Chumley, suddenly changing his whole attitude of strained attention to one of furious vexation, dashed the whole contents of the little pan, and the negative itself upon the ground, and stamped upon them.

"Chummy!" I cried, "What in the world are you doing? You've spoilt the whole invention."

"I don't care if I have!" roared Chumley, "Oh! I was so near success; and our great aunt—our idiot of a great aunt, after all my work and trouble, has winked twice and fogged the plate!"

.
I don't know how to make the younger generation believe my story, except by the evidence of two stubborn facts to prove its truth.

Our great aunt wore her original glass-eye to the end of the chapter, and Chumley never invented another camera.

"SUCCESS OR FAILURE?"

SEVEN LETTERS.

I. TO MR. EDWARD AMORY, ACTOR.

MY DEAR TED,

I was sincerely pleased to receive your last and most interesting letter.

I hasten to reply, and to congratulate you upon the success you have achieved in the melodrama you are now touring with; but I wish, at the same time, that you personated some character of a more elevating nature than an illiterate Irishman. It would give me no pleasure to see you in yellow stockings, a green coat and breeches, a battered hat and red wig! This, my dear Ted, is not high art, nor is it instructive, as the stage Irishman is as dissimilar from the real Irishman as I am from the majority of youthful authors. Can I say more?

That reminds me. I have just finished writing a little play entitled "The Passing of Arthur," founded on the old British legend of King Arthur and his Round Table, and it strikes me as the best thing I have yet attempted.

I have little hope that it will appeal to you, as the spirit that predominates is very deep, the characters are ideal, and many of the lines (it is in blank verse entirely, except the death-scenes that I couldn't manage) recall some of Shakespeare's happiest speeches. Don't think me conceited; it really strikes me in that light, and, in short, I believe that it means a near success for me, and a high claim to distinction among the more intense playwrights of the day—an old and great ambition.

I am sending you the MS., and I hope you will read it carefully and give me your opinion as to the most likely theatrical manager to appreciate it. I give no hint as to the idea and drift of my play, as I want your candid opinion. Having only seen a few of my early poems, I am confident that it will be a revelation to you.

Kindest remembrances to Miss Toller, of your company. You might show her "The Passing of Arthur." I am sure it will surprise her, coming from me.

Ever, my dear Ted,

Very sincerely yours,

PHILIP CRUMBLY BAKER.

II. TO P. C. BAKER, ESQ., AUTHOR.

DEAR BAKER,

Yours of the 12th to hand. Go ahead, and all good luck to you!

I got the MS., and I must say it *is* a revelation to me. It knocked me over, my boy! I didn't think you were up to it. Why, it's great, and the character of *King Arthur* fits yours truly like a scalp wig! This part of the Irishman I am playing now is awfully poor beside it, for, if *King Arthur* is well hit off, I'll be hanged if there isn't a big laugh in every line.

Lily Toller has got it now, and I showed her your letter, just to let her see what a first-rate joker you are. She was surprised. She says you never struck *her* as being clever; but you mustn't mind that. Girls of her sort only judge by appearances.

We're playing to splendid business everywhere, and there's some talk of giving a benefit to our manager in a week or two. We all think him a thickheaded dummy; but he hasn't gone off with the cash, so we feel grateful, and a benefit is likely to keep him square for the run of the piece.

Now, we're not a swagger company, as you may imagine ; but, if you like, we might try your burlesque for the benefit. What do you say ? It will give it a chance, Baker, my boy, and I'll see that it's properly cast, which means I'd take *King Arthur* myself, and let the rest of them divide the other parts.

Let me hear from you as soon as possible. I've written an awfully long letter, but that piece of yours set me off ; it's too funny !

Yours in high feather,
(And the most beastly diggings in the country,)

TED AMORY.

III. TO EDWARD AMORY.

DEAR AMORY,

If you were not an old and tried (albeit unappreciative) friend, your last letter would have hurt my feelings exceedingly.

I never joke, and really think that you yourself are carrying that detestable habit too far. Is it possible that you misunderstood me ? No, that cannot be !

Seriously, my dear Amory, could you pro-

duce "The Passing of Arthur?" Could your company play it? I thought that the majority were low comedians; but I am so anxious to have my play presented that I could sacrifice a great deal to bring about a consummation so devoutly to be wished.

What is ambition to the mind but a glorious fever? What is success but a marvellous and healing drug?

Though I am young, and the general public unsympathetic, I feel—I am sure—that the true spirit of my work will touch the heart and elevate the mind. But I shall tire you out with all this. Briefly, I trust that you will enter thoughtfully and artistically into the play.

One other thing, are there any alterations necessary? I have made many scenes short and strong, for the purpose of dramatic representation. Does the scene in which *King Arthur* enters his court disguised as a servant strike you as far-fetched? I shall wait most anxiously for a reply to this important question. Kindest regards to Miss Toller.

Very sincerely yours,

PHILIP CRUMBLY BAKER.

IV. TO P. C. BAKER.

DEAR MR. BAKER,

Mr. Amory asked me to write you a little note. I think "The Passing of Arthur" is so charming; I am quite delighted with it. It is *too* sweet and good of you to let us have it for our manager's benefit.

With just a few little alterations (which Mr. Amory will undertake) it will be just perfect. He has cast me for *Guinevere*. I always *loved* serio-comic roles, and I will do my very best, dear Mr. Baker, to make your heroine chic and entertaining. Shall I dress the part in scarlet and black? Wouldn't a little white sunbonnet be the thing? Perhaps it is not early English and queenly, but it would brighten it up so much to wear very gay colours; I think I *must*! Oh! what a dreadful scribble this is! Please excuse it, and believe me, dear Mr. Baker,

Enthusiastically yours,

LILY TOLLER.

P.S.—I shall introduce a skirt dance in the last act of your play; or, do you think a sword dance (in costume) would suit the character of *Queen Guinevere* better? Oh! I am *longing* for the performance!

V. TO PHILIP CRUMBLY BAKER.

DEAR BAKER,

Just a note to tell you how we are getting on ; swimmingly, my boy ! rehearsing all day. I've touched up the first act, and introduced a screaming song for myself (all my music's catchy) ; everything ready for the performance next week. I'm going to play *Arthur* in a blue evening suit, except as the servant, when I wear white and a cook's cap. I think of carrying an immense crush hat, and appearing with a bald head. Won't it be corking ?

To think of you—you, Baker, my boy !—being a successful writer of burlesque ! I can't get over it ; it breaks me up ! We'll send you a wire on the great day. Why haven't you written ? Are you dead ? Let me know if I shall announce the piece by the *late* Crumbly Baker.

Hastily yours,

TED.

VI. TO P. C. BAKER.

DEAR OLD BAKER,

I only wired you last night, "Roaring success," but I can tell you this morning that

we've done the trick. "The Passing of Arthur" has quite caught on! The house was crowded. The first act was snaky, and so was yours truly. The second act was great; the third was a certainty! and the last (when Lily Toller danced a skirt dance) finished up with a bang! All the morning papers rave. It is the quaintest, funniest mock serious skit they have ever seen.

A thousand congratulations, my dear boy! I'm more than glad, if you are satisfied. You're sure to get an offer for it, and your name (as a funny man) is made. A thousand congratulations over again!

Ever affectionately,

TED AMORY.

VII. TO EDWARD AMORY.

MY DEAR TED,

I am very grateful for all the energy and work you have put into "The Passing of Arthur;" but the question is, not to the actors, not to your manager, but to me! Is it a success or a failure—which? I never thought you were speaking sincerely when you called my work amusing and absurd. I took it all

as a foolish joke until you produced the play, and then I had to believe that you really thought it funny.

Ah! well, it's done, and after all, a capricious Fate may not have intended me for an intense writer, because—oh, Ted! *King Arthur* in a crush hat! *Queen Guinevere* in a sun-bonnet!—because I may as well tell you seriously, and all jesting aside, "*The Passing of Arthur*" is a tragedy.

As ever,

PHILIP CRUMBLY BAKER.

GO!

A CANADIAN TROTTING STORY.

We never could decide who won the race. Foster declares his "Campus" had sole right to the prize money; Duncan is ready to swear that his "Rattler" was the victor; and I am perfectly sure that my "Cockney" was the only horse that deserves to be mentioned in the record of our great race.

Are the most diabolical appliances of modern science to be allowed on a track? Is the most ludicrous invention that ever entered a man's brain to be reckoned as fair? Or will the finest exhibition of speed be found the heaviest in the scales of justice?

Last year Duncan, Foster and I were living in a small city in Western Ontario. Foster possessed a bay—a gaunt, long-legged framework of an animal. Duncan's chestnut was most inappropriately named, being the reverse of a rattler. But my "Cockney" was a pro-

missing two-year-old—just good enough, as the saying goes, to lose good races.

"You are so proud of your colt, Lancing," said Foster one evening as we sat smoking on the verandal., "but I'd bet you five dollars to a match that for a steady trot Duncan's old horse or my 'Campus' would beat your 'Cockney.'"

"Well, I should say so," said Duncan. "The colt isn't a bit level-headed; he breaks at every third step. Now, Foster's 'Campus' is too thin, his bones scarcely hold together, and while his front legs are trotting his hind legs are walking; but my 'Rattler' is a monument of strength; just think of his gait, boys!"

"Rather an intricate gait to follow," said Foster, "a kind of five-barred gate! Now, my 'Campus'—"

"Always looks to me," I interrupted, "as if the buggy were shoving him along, instead of him pulling the buggy. But my 'Cockney'—"

"A splendid animal for a walking race," said Duncan, "but mighty poor at a trot!"

And the discussion ended in a unanimously expressed desire to back our horses against each other on a fair field. Foster knew the

owner of a half-mile track, and we arranged to keep the affair a secret, get the use of the track some afternoon, and make up a purse between us.

But what of the preparations? Foster shut himself up in his own room with a small electric battery, Duncan was engrossed in the making of some mysterious machine which he refused to show us, and I borrowed a sulky and contentedly jogged around the track behind my promising colt.

August opened in a burst of glorious sunshine. I shall never forget the day of our race; the brilliance of the cloudless sky, the heated breeze, and the glare of the whitewashed fencing. I arrived the first and languidly trotted round; Duncan is the next, with the owner of the track, a boy, and the "Rattler"—hitched to the oldest vehicle (I should imagine) in Canada.

"He looks in good shape, doesn't he, Lancing?" said Duncan, pointing to the animal.

"Capital, old man; but what's the matter with his feet?"

"New kind o' shoes, I guess," put in the

boy, for the horse had a fairly large, square box attached to each foot.

"They look like Saratoga trunks," I remarked. "Who's to drive him, Duncan?"

"This young gentleman is my jockey; you know how to win a race, don't you, sonny?"

"You bet—" began the boy, when Foster, in a smart yellow sulkey, came plunging down upon us at full gallop.

"Am I late?" said he, checking his framework's mad career, and jumping down.

"Not a bit. Are you going to drive yourself?"

"No, dear boy. Alec Meloy has promised me—here he comes."

Meloy was a professional driver; a tall, taciturn Canuck, with sleepy eyes, high cheekbones, and a skin tanned to a dark mahogany color. He got slowly from his buggy, and tied his horse to the fence.

"Wal," he remarked, looking at "Rattler," "that's the kind o' horse to run his head agin a brick wall and not mind it!" He then paid me the compliment of saying that "Cockney" was a dandy, and fit to hang on your watch chain.

"We all agree to the terms of the bet, don't we?" said Foster. "The purse is thirty dollars, and the first horse to pass the line takes the whole."

"Two out o' three half-mile heats, I suppose, genl'men?" said Meloy.

"No, a single mile race!" we replied. Meloy and I jumped into our seats, and the owner of the track took his position in the judge's stand. I was surprised to see that Foster and Duncan followed their drivers to the place where we turned for the start, and even more so when Duncan, stooping down, removed the square boxes from his horse's feet. I then perceived that the "Rattler" had the most peculiar shoes on, round in shape, and with a hole on one side of each exactly like the keyhole of a large clock.

"This is a beautiful animal, boys," said Duncan, "but his limbs can't keep up with his spirit, and so I mean to help him. These shoes are fitted up with a cute clock-work inside; here's the key, and when you're ready I'll wind him up and let 'er flicker full fling."

"Ginger! I thought *I* was scarcely acting on the square when I brought this, but it's

nothing to your shoes," and Foster forthwith took his electric battery out of Meloy's buggy. "I intend," he continued, "to give my 'Campus' a slight electric shock. Lancing, with his superior horse, can't object to being handicapped."

"Are you ready, there?" shouted the starter. "Altogether, please; are you ready?"

Duncan bent down, key in hand, to wind up the "Rattler," I was next him, and "Campus" stood third.

"Are you ready—go!"

The shock from Foster, a cloud of dust, a whirr of machinery from the clock-work shoes, violent ringing of the judge's bell, and I was dashing over the ground at the rate of twenty miles an hour. The whitewashed palings seem to be flying past; we swing round the further curve, and "Cockney" breaks into a run as the judge's stand springs up before me. I pull him in, and we are on again.

"Campus" and Meloy keep on passing me at a furious gallop; I begin to count—six, seven times have they been around to my once. Ah! there goes Duncan's "Rattler." By Jove,

what a pace. Is he stopping? Yes—no—yes; he's stopping, stopping, stopped!

Before I can wonder why, we are passed once again by the galloping "Campus," and now we are on the home stretch, and I urge "Cockney" to mend the pace. The judge's stand is before us; I see the wire above, but just as I wave my whip with a shout of triumph "Cockney" starts wildly, and plunges away from something on the ground that is flying along directly in front—is it possible? Trotting still—without the "Rattler," all by themselves, and just ahead of me under the wire, are Duncan's clockwork shoes!

We were half an hour catching those shoes; then we collected the yellow sulky and what was left of Meloy from all parts of the track.

And now the question is—who won the race? Was it "Campus," who had galloped eight times around the track? Was it "Cockney," who had trotted twice? Or was it the mechanical clock-work shoes of the fiery "Rattler?"

